TIME TO RENEW?

TO: MESSAGE MEDIA
PO BOX 9007
BERKELEY CA 94709

☐ Continue sending me RTN for___year(s) at $29 per year, 2 yrs $56 or 3 yrs $79.

☐ I am eligible for the senior (62 yrs) rate of $26 per yr or 2yrs $51 (initial:_____).

☐ Also send me Train Rider Magazine for only $14 for 12 issues.

☐ My remittance is enclosed.

☐ Please bill me (plus $2 billing fee).

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

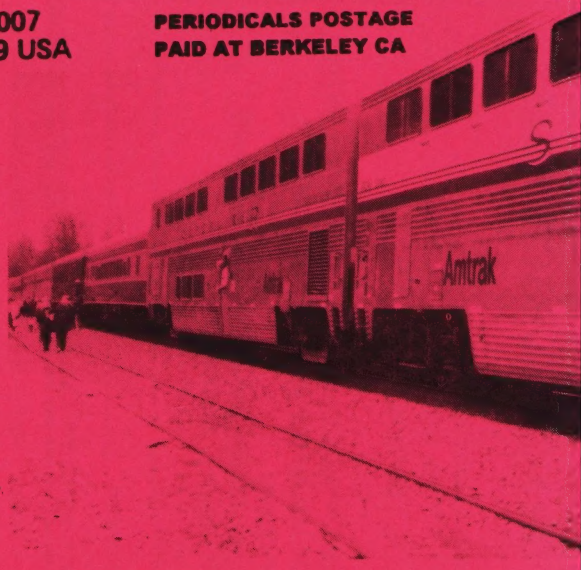
FROM: PO Box 9007
Berkeley CA 94709 USA

PERIODICALS POSTAGE
PAID AT BERKELEY CA

IT'S TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION
IF A "TIME TO RENEW"
MESSAGE APPEARS
ON YOUR LABEL.

PLEASE MAKE CHECK
PAYABLE TO
MESSAGE MEDIA.

FOR FASTER SERVICE
PLEASE INCLUDE A
COPY OF YOUR LABEL.



To: PERIODICAL

2141 /R 999

4249

Here's Your Holiday Issue of RAIL TRAVEL NEWS

(R) 1-17-2002

#641

Subscribe Now!

Write: Message Media,
Box 9007,
Berkeley CA 94709

Send me Rail Travel News for ___ years
Amount enclosed: _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY STATE ZIP

RTN subscription rates:

One year (24 issues) $29
Two years $56
Three years $79

Senior rate (age 62+)
$26/yr, $51/two yrs

www.TrainWeb.com

Rail travel photos, video clips and virtual tours of trains and stations!

Schedules, route guides, radio frequencies, travelogues, examples of costs, tipping and other rail travel customs.

Click (ety-clack) onto RTN's Web site at *www.railtravelnews.com.* Hosted by Trainweb.

Send E-mail to: RTN@trainweb.com

Zephyr Travel & Tours

800-676-6631

Train & Plane Tickets • Hotels & Cars • Groups

Amtrak and Via Rail Specialist

Travel Planning by:

- **E-Mail: TedZephyr@compuserve.com**
- **Fax: 510-653-1550 • Voice: 800-676-6631**

www.trainweb.com/zephyr

Amtrak VIA

Ted Kildegaard

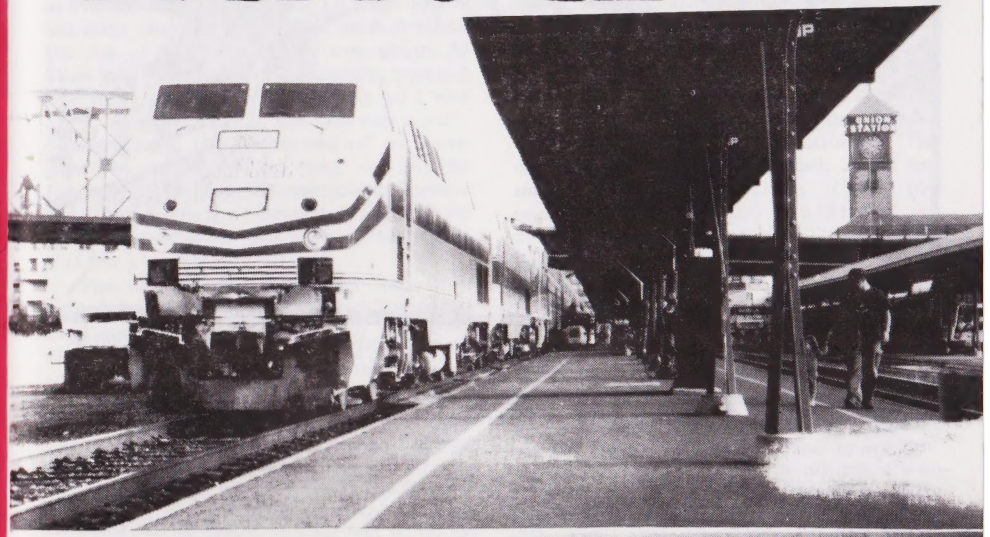
P.O. Box 5448 · Berkeley, California 94705

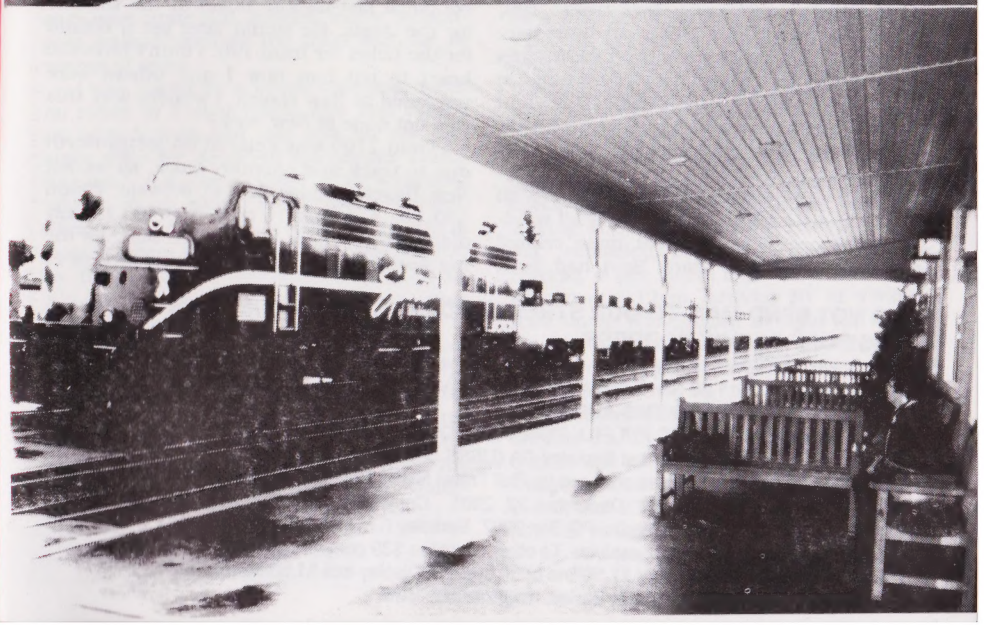
RAILTRAVELNEWS.COM

R 1-17-2002

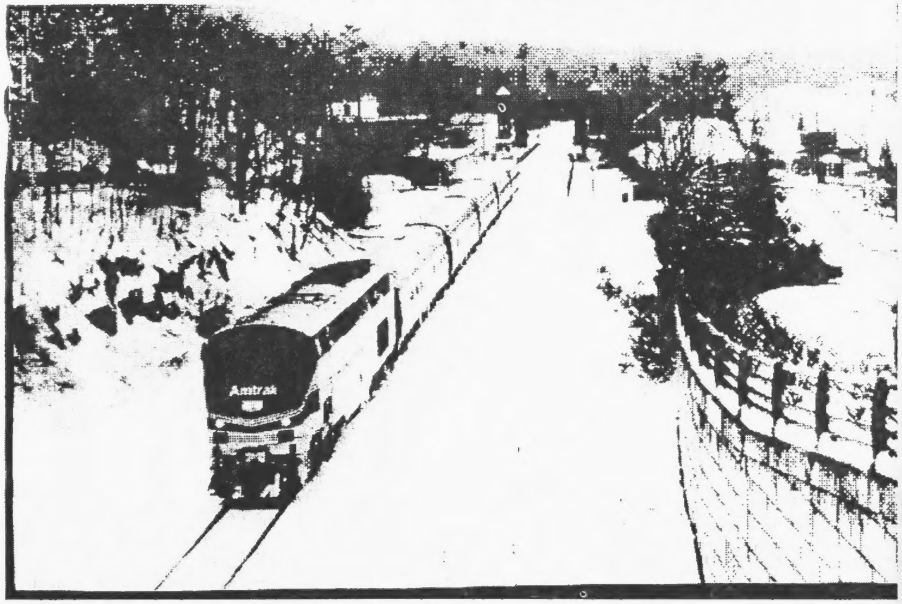
PRICE $1.25
ISSUE NO. 641
DECEMBER 22, 2001

RAIL TRAVEL NEWS





EAST COAST REPORT



Amtrak Empire Service train 281 blasts through the Metro-North commuter station at Garrison NY on Feb 20, 2000, en route from New York to Niagara Falls NY. This location is at milepost 50 on the former New York Central's famous "Water Level Route". This photo was taken from the overhead roadway that leads into the small village of Garrison, an excellent location for rail photography.—Alex Mayes.

Amtrak scored big points on Wed, Nov 21, the day before Thanksgiving, when passengers for train 190, which was reported running an hour late, were put on *Acela Express* train 2190. This was only for passengers traveling to Providence, Route 128, Back Bay and Boston, but many passengers were pleased to be riding the new *Acela* at "Regional" fares.

Train 2190 reached New Haven with plenty of aisle seats available, but all window seats occupied. My seat mate related that he (headed for Back Bay) had been ticketed on train 190, but at New York, when he saw that train listed an hour late, bought a last-minute ticket at the window for the *Acela*. He would later get a refund for the ticket for train 190. I didn't have the heart to tell him how I and others were upgraded at New Haven. I wonder why this was not done at New York?

Train 2190 was delayed on Metro-North due to track and catenary work, so we left New Haven 25mins late at 8:54am. (Train 190 has a departure time of 8:48.) I really didn't mind riding in an aisle seat, as the *big Acela* windows allow for a great view of the scenery. My seat mate, who usually flies, is now hooked on the *Acela* and plans more trips on the train in the future.

After a non-stop trip for me, I detrained at Providence at 10:21 and the train departed soon thereafter, before I even reached the top of the escalator. It was about 30 mins late at that point. I, however, was not due in until 10:36 on train 190, so I was early. Thanks, Amtrak; the ride was *great!*

Returning, I was dropped off in Providence in ample time on Mon, Nov 26, the final day of Amtrak's Thanksgiving Service. Still, with all trains reserved, I marched up to an open window and in "seconds" I had a ticket for train 173.

The canned announcement had been updated and spieled off "Newark International Airport" in addition to all the other stops. New Haven has *live* train announcements, which I like better.

I was at the west end of the platform, as I know the best chance of getting a window seat is at the head end of the train. I found what I wanted in a non-working café car used as a coach. The platform behind me was crowded with passengers, so the rear cars were quite full. Indeed, many passengers walked through the train past me in search of seats.

I was joined by a young college student en route to Philadelphia. She had ridden up with friends and was now on her first train ride. We departed Providence 7mins late and ran down track 2 to Kingston, where many more passengers boarded. There is a nice new westbound platform here adjacent to track 1, but notice Note 90 in the timetable: passengers have to be *bused* to the platform! That was not needed this time.

It was a nice ride to New Haven, where we arrived 14mins late. This train was in the station less than the 5mins called for, so a few minutes were made up. I hope everyone had a nice Thanksgiving. I certainly did, and the train rides were the whipped cream on the pie.—Bob Underwood.

DO NOT SEND MAIL TO OUR STREET ADDRESS. PLEASE USE OUR POST OFFICE BOX ADDRESS.

RAIL TRAVEL NEWS (ISSN 0896—4440) is published semimonthly (twice a month) by Message Media, 1611 #8 San Pablo Ave, Berkeley CA 94702. James Russell, Editor.

(DO NOT SEND MAIL TO THIS ADDRESS, WHICH IS GIVEN ONLY TO FULFILL POSTAL REQUIREMENTS.)

Periodicals Class postage paid at Berkeley CA (USPS 006—012).

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: Rail Travel News, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

Vol. 30, no.13. Whole no. 641, December 22, 2001. Copyright © 2001 by Message Media. Address all mail to Message Media, PO Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709. Subscription rate $29 per year to US & possessions. To other countries $39 per year. Single copy $1.25.

RTN AD RATES: Express Ads $1.50/line of 80 spaces. Display ads $1.50/square inch.

Web site: www.railtravelnews.com E-mail: rtn@trainweb.com

ON THE COVER

Two photos to accompany the trip report in our last issue, when Gene Poon wrote about his October travels in the Pacific Northwest. Top, the northbound *Coast Starlight* is refueled at Portland Union Station on Oct 14, with engine 119 at the head. Bottom, the *Spirit of Washington Dinner Train* in its storage track at the Renton WA station on Oct 16. Photos by Gene Poon.

THE SECRET SCHEDULE

By Jim Langan

Dec 9 came and went with no announcements from Washington. In fact, there have been very few releases since mid-Nov. Expecting at least four *Acela Expresses* to replace Metroliners, I stopped at both Metropark and Newark on Dec 8. No agents knew of any changes, and they were still issuing the Sep 30 timetables that contained the errors, when changes were made at the last minute, keeping Metroliners 103 & 104 and *Acela Express* 2180 & 2181 and not starting *Acela Express* 2104, 2107 & 2109. The card-route timetables were issued correctly.

However, come Monday Dec 10, an ad in the NY Times business section stated that there were now nine *Acela Expresses* leaving NY for Boston and 11 NY-Wash, with all departure times listed. This ad had the same layout as the [illegible] edition for the Sep 30 [illegible] me to the library to get on Amtrak's web site, attempting to make a reservation after 6am. Sure enough, train 2164 showed up as a 3:03pm departure for Boston and no. 2167 as a 5pm for Washington, agreeing with the ad. My source of last resort came through Monday evening with the weekly Bulletin Order #7-33 for the NEC Employee timetable #7, General Order #703.

So the new *Acela Express* #2164 started operation Dec 9, leaving Washington at 12 noon, arriving NY at 2:45pm, and then leaving at 3:03pm, arriving Boston at 6:33 pm, replacing Metroliner #112. In the reverse, a new *Acela Express* #2167 leaves Boston at 1:12pm, arriving NY at 4:42pm, then on to Washington at 5pm for a 7:48 pm arrival, replacing Metroliner #123, and no other changes in weekday regionals, or weekends.

Acela set #20 was accepted for service on Nov 30. Up to Dec 9, 11 sets were required out of 14 in service to cover the weekday schedules, with each set covering two of the 22 trains per day. Now, with 16 sets in service, and the two new trains

passing each other mid-afternoon west of New Haven, it looks as if 13 sets are required, as each will make only one one-way trip per day. This gives the Boston and Washington maintenance centers five sets each overnight, with the best out first each morning for the 24 trains. With set #21 (a temporary numbering) delivered for testing on Dec 1, it could be ready for operational acceptance by Jan 28, when sources are saying another change will occur, and at least two or three more trains added. Set #21 is composed of 2004, 3405, 3511, 3304, 3500, 3505, 3217, 2028, with 3217, 3304 and 3511 new, and the balance from original test sets 1, 3 and 4.

The same Dec 10 Bulletin Order added switcher #169 SW 1001 (ex-CSX) to Clear-

ance tables from CP-Bergen (NJ) to Harold Tower (LIC) and CP-Empire (NYC) with dispatcher permission, as a rescue engine for tunnel electrical breakdowns. *Acela* set #2, the last, which has geometry car #10003 in its consist, finally returned to Bombardier-Alstom for retrofit in early Dec. The future of #10003 is unknown.

Ten F40s are still stored serviceable at Albany-Rensselaer, and are called for sporadically for service on work trains and occasionally back up passenger runs, such as #64 *Maple Leaf* on Dec 7. Two F40s, #226 & #278, are supposedly being modified for MBTA service. Finally, a new NPCU #90340, painted in *Cascade* colors, went to the Northwest (unknown if it has a baggage compartment or not), and #90220 was transferred East for either the New Haven shuttles or *Downeaster* service.

Two new NJ Transit ALP-46s from Germany were received in Pueblo CO for acceptance testing, and a third delivered directly to NJT's Meadowlands facility for employee training. No publicity photos yet, but these 20 locomotives are based on the latest DB-German class 101s, with over 128 in service at least three years and more on order. They are now famous for the "Metropolitan" services Cologne-Hamburg with the same amenities as the *Acelas*. I saw one in Intercity service at Mannheim on my 1998 trip, just after they were accepted. MARC had as of Dec 10 two of their six HHP-8s of their add-on order to Amtrak's: #4910-11. They will be used on the Wash-Baltimore Penn line. Training has been going on at Philadelphia's Race St Yard.

SHORE LINE EAST HEADS WEST
By Bob Underwood

It was a long time coming, but on Mon, Dec 17 new Shore Line East train 3633 made its first through run from Old Saybrook CT to Stamford. The day dawned dark and gloomy, so I stayed indoors after a few quick errands, trying to beat the rain (I didn't make it).

On the scanner I heard the train arrive at New Haven on time at 7:03am on track 14. The Metro-North connection was on track 2. With only Bridgeport and Stamford as stops, Metro-North train 3633 (same train number) departed at 7:06am for a 7:55 arrival in Stamford. For passengers en route to Bridgeport, they arrive 9mins earlier than before, and for Stamford, 15 mins are saved. Train 3633 is entirely new, replacing bus service Old Saybrook to New Haven.

The new through trains are crewed by Amtrak and Metro-North on the respective portions of the journey, and separate tickets are required except for the joint monthly tickets sold by Metro-North. This could change in the future.

So what happens to the equipment when it reaches Stamford? It lays over in the yards, then departs Stamford as new train 3614 at 9:30am, making Metro-North stops at Bridgeport, Stratford, Milford and New Haven. It arrives New Haven at 10:25 am, lays over 10mins so *Acela* train 2152 can depart at 10:29am, and then the train makes all stops to Old Saybrook, where it arrives at 11:25am.

During its layover in Old Saybrook, trains 93 Regional and 2154 *Acela* are scheduled to blast through without stopping. New Shore Line East train 3663 leaves Old Saybrook at 12:10pm and runs nonstop to New Haven for a 12:50pm arrival, making connections with the 12:59pm Metro-North to Grand Central, NY. This first day he had no connections for Metro-North, but he did have one passenger off in New Haven. If he had been empty, he would have been able to run into the CT DOT shop, bypassing Union Station altogether.

Metro-North deadhead train 1137 is scheduled to depart New Haven at 3:25pm. This is Shore Line East equipment for through train 3640, which departs Stamford at 4:35pm. On Metro-North this train has only the Bridgeport stop before its 5:23 pm arrival in New Haven. After a crew change, the train departs at 5:30pm, making all stops to New London.

Let's hope that these new runthrough trains are successful in increasing patronage on both Shore Line East and Metro-North. News reports already point out that through trains to and from Greenwich could become reality in April.

●●●

NJ Transit announced Dec 11 a fare hike to 10%, its first systemwide since 1989 and the first in northern New Jersey since 1900. There are some aberrations to the increase: rail fare from NY to Newark will rise to $3.30 one way, from current fares of $2.50 to Penn Station on Newark Division trains and $3 to Broad Street station on Midtown Direct trains to Summit, Dover and Gladstone. The $1.50 flat fare on the Hudson-Bergen light rail lines will not be affected. Roundtrip excursion fares on trains, with 25% discounts over one-way fares, may be abolished on weekdays. Discounted fares for seniors and handicapped may increase more than regular adult fares.

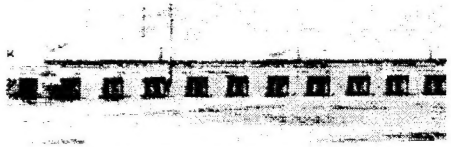
Hearings will be held by NJT throughout the state Jan 2. The fare rise is set for Feb 10.

NJT says the fare hike is needed to begin closing a projected $3.1 billion deficit resulting from reduced state and federal aid, and major system [illegible] projects. These include two light rail lines, the Secaucus Transfer project in the Meadowlands to enable connections between the Main, Bergan County and Pascack Valley lines, and the purchase of 200-400 new cars, including bilevels. Operating costs have also gone up 67% since 1991. NJT has increasingly relied on funds from its capital budget for day-to-day operations, while the state takes on debt against future fuel tax revenues and other money sources to fund capital projects. NJT was also hit hard by the Sep 11 World Trade Center disaster, with displaced PATH riders forced onto NJT trains, adding to overcrowding and heightening the need for new equipment.

The Port Authority of NY & NJ announced a $544 million project to restore PATH rail service to lower Manhattan and Exchange Place in Jersey City on the Hudson waterfront. The plan includes pumping out the completely flooded Hudson tubes and rebuilding the World Trade Center PATH station or building a new station just north of the site on Church Street.

Three youths ages 13, 15 and 19 in Falls township in Bucks County PA were struck and killed by an Amtrak *Acela Express* train moving at more than 100 mph on Dec 9. *Acela Express* train 2253, running from Boston to Washington, struck the three teens as they walked along the track through an underpass beneath tracks leading from Morrisville to the nearby Norfolk Southern freight yard. Two other youths with the group escaped injury.

The youths' families blamed the railroad for not putting up fencing or maintaining it to thwart trespassers. An Amtrak spokesperson said rail officials were examining the age, condition and height of a fence at the scene. She said that "fencing is generally not a deterrent to right-of-way trespassing." The train was held for two hours at the scene with some 300 passengers aboard before being released and proceeding to Philadelphia, where it was terminated and passengers transferred to other trains so the *Acela* equipment could be examined for damage.—James Thornton.



Amtrak's Jan 28 Northeast Corridor timetable will use the same cover as the current timetable, with just the date changed. It will be hard to tell which timetable is which without looking closely at the cover date.

The South Jersey Transportation Planning Organization, which represents four New Jersey counties--Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland and Salem—recently hired a consulting firm to study the feasibility of rejuvenating four lines as public rail transit corridors. The four, selected from an initial list of 30, are: Atlantic City to Mays Landing (16 miles); Winslow Junction to Cape May (28 miles); Millville-Vineland-Winslow Junction (15 miles); and Glassboro-Vineland (32 miles). The consultants' report should be out by the middle of 2002. Of the four, one or two will be selected for serious consideration for activation of rail service.

New MARC commuter train service between Frederick MD and Washington DC began on Dec 17. On the first day, 304 passengers boarded in Frederick on the three inbound trains. There are three corresponding outbound evening trains. There has been no passenger service on the line for quite a few years. Frederick has two

stations: one downtown and one at the edge of town. After several miles, the track meets the old main line from Baltimore, which brings the trains to Point of Rocks, where they join the long-established MARC commuter line on the former B&O main line, route of the *Capitol Ltd.* They make a couple of stops before Washington to interface with the Metro system.

The trips take about 90 minutes; however, rush hour travel on the Interstate can take two hours. Traffic on the established line to Brunswick, etc., has been growing as more people move into the area with hobs in the DC area. The service was actually begun when the B&O was operating it, but was later taken over by the state. The Frederick service has been in the planning stage for several years.

The new service extends the Brunswick line by 13.5 miles and adds two stations. The state paid the construction cost of $56 million except for a federal contribution of $44 million.—Ken Maylath.

●●●

Dec 14 was the press inaugural run of the long-awaited Boston MA to Portland ME train, the *Downeaster*, and on Sat, Dec 15 the first revenue runs occurred.

The VIP inaugural run ran northbound from Boston to Portland and functioned also as a positioning move for the equipment to begin revenue runs the next day. The full report of that inaugural run, by Gene Poon, will appear in our next issue.

Amtrak said in a Dec 5 release that the reinauguration of the train, after 30 years with no service, was "a triumphant affirmation of America's rail renaissance", and Amtrak hailed the "successful grass-roots campaign" fought by TrainRiders Northeast to get the service started.

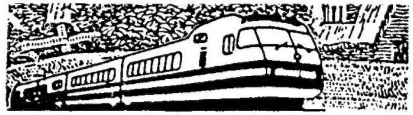
Amtrak said that besides coaches, the trains will include a café car and a premium-service Coastal Club car, with more spacious seating, complimentary non-alcoholic drinks and personal copies of USA Today newspapers.

The café car menu includes rosemary shrimp over Caesar salad, grilled marinated Portabella mushroom sandwiches on foccacia bread, "award-winning" clam chowder and fresh-baked apple crisp. The food is prepared by Epicurean Feast, a premiere Massachusetts food service vendor.

For the special run of Dec 14, Amtrak said that church bells would ring in each town as the train approaches. This harkens back to a tradition begun a century ago, when the bells were rung to alert the next town that the train was approaching. The name "*Downeaster*" relates to the days of great sailing ships that left Boston Harbor and traveled to Maine on the winds that blew down and eastward to Maine.

News reports from the East Coast on the startup of revenue service on the *Downeaster*—there are four round trips daily—produced laudatory remarks about the new train. Reportedly over 1700 people rode on Dec 15. Michael Dukakis was mentioned a lot in news reports; he rode the VIP train up from Boston, and back on a revenue train on the 15th.

Despite the four daily round trips, some critics were already calling for more daily trips and for some changes in time slots.



A week before Christmas, a Florida transportation advisory group told news media that due to the economy, money could not be provided to pave the way for implementing Amtrak service on the Florida East Coast Railway between Jacksonville and Miami. However, as reported in Florida Today a few days later, and the Miami Herald on Dec 23, Gov. Jeb Bush has cleared the way to provide $82.5 million in funding to construct 23 miles of passing sidings, construct stations, and upgrade a connector track between the FEC and CSX lines at West Palm Beach.

Gov. Bush indicated that rail service along the east coast is very important and he chastised the transportation group for not authorizing the funding before his action.

Reports indicate that one daily round trip would start on the FEC in early 2003, with a second round trip added by 2005. These services would involve re-routing existing NY-Miami runs from the Orlando and/or Ocala routes. New stations would be added at St. Augustine, Daytona Beach, Titusville, Cocoa, Melbourne, Vero Beach, Ft. Pierce and Stuart. Existing Amtrak stops between West Palm Beach and Miami would be used.—Jack Turner.

Many people have been traveling closer to home, avoiding air flights, since Sep 11. For example, on the Jersey Shore, including Atlantic City, tourist business has been up markedly this fall and winter. Presumably, the rail lines are sharing in this increase in patronage.

MIDWEST REPORT

	20-Nov	21-Nov	22-Nov	23-Nov	24-Nov	25-Nov	26-Nov	27-Nov	28-Nov	29-Nov	30-Nov
#365	206	263	87	141	203		152	37	53	103	169
#367						309					
#370	109	111	22	101			27	44	32	41	60
#371		67	101	180	111	144	85	75	58	39	139
#351		344	263	318	204	329	218	110	107	178	356
#353	163	391	125	201	256	371	160	73	58	95	293
#355			38	74	112	363	46			72	141
#300				173							
#41			95c 19sl		46c 15sl	104c 21sl	82c 21sl	98c 16sl			57c 21sl

The table above presents passenger counts for some Midwestern trains for the period Nov 20-30, and the table below covers the period Dec 1-10. These are counts from a Midwestern Amtrak source, and not the final count from Amtrak headquarters. Amtrak has not released any route-by-route ridership data since the figures we last published in RTN. Some table cells have missing data. The counts for the *Three Rivers*, train 41, are broken down by coach (c) and sleeper (sl).

	1-Dec	2-Dec	3-Dec	4-Dec	5-Dec	6-Dec	7-Dec	8-Dec	9-Dec	10-Dec
#365	72		103	67	49	77	157	54		
#367		85							71	
#370			45	47	38	47	66	132	196	
#371	183	34	40	50	33	55	170	172	51	60
#351	296	103	131	152	167	168	300	224	114	128
#353	130	128	61	79	52	108	266	74	128	
#355	21	63	28	30	23	71	120	43	90	
#300			110		114	137		233	98	103
#22			119	138	109		147	102	132	
#41	78c 15sl	75c 18sl			60c 12sl	49c 7sl			50c 15sl	
#304				86	80	136	229	77	189	
#391				49			167			
#392		110		61			169			

Westbound ***Empire Builder***, train 7 of Dec 20, had a problem with its Smoking Coach. Literally, it was a Smoking Coach—as in "on fire". The car was set out between Glenview IL and Milwaukee.—Gene Poon.

The *Ann Rutledge*, train 304 on Dec 24 derailed its lead coach while passing through Joliet IL. Service was disrupted for several hours while the car was re-railed.

Two *Southwest Chief* trains were blocked when a BNSF freight derailed west of Albuquerque NM the morning of Dec 19. Amtrak guests were bused between sets of equipment.

Denver's RTD board is technically nonpartisan, but directors of both parties were uniformly critical of Gov. Bill Owens' rejection of RTD's FasTracks initiative, expressing their opinions at the Dec 18 board meeting. Some directors had met with the governor the previous week to ask for his support for a bill that would give RTD permission to ask voters to increase the level of RTD's sales tax rate to 1%, which would put RTD at parity with all other transit districts in Colorado. But Gov. Owens said he would veto the bill if it reached his desk in the next legislative session. He prefers that RTD build transit corridors one at a time, while the FasTracks plan calls for building all six identified corridors during a 10-year period after a sales tax increase is approved. The board believes the voters would be more inclined to approve all six corridors in the region at once.

RTD gen'l mgr Cal Marsella said that the Southwest Light Rail Line has officially been declared completed on time and under budget. Remaining funds are being used to buy more light rail vehicles for this busy corridor.—Jon Esty.

Montana transportation officials would like a second Amtrak route through the state—a southern route, that used by the former *North Coast Hiawatha*. They calculate that it would require an annual $3.6 million operating subsidy. They will update the state's rail plan in Sep 2002, but for now are waiting to see how Amtrak emerges from the current round of legislative negotiations. A MT DOT official told the Helena newspaper that "...the *Empire Builder* is very important to Montana, and...we want to make sure that service continues.."

WEST COAST REPORT

The Portland Streetcar, which began service on July 20, is carrying more passengers than predicted. For October, with the prediction being 2500 daily, the weekday average was 2700, with 3300 on Saturdays and 1200 on Sundays. At that rate, it should carry over a million riders by the end of its first year.

Portland State University students are heavy users of the service. The actual goal of the line construction was to promote development, and that is happening even faster than expectations.

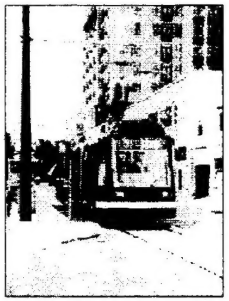
Using the same Czech-built Skoda streetcars as Portland, the Tacoma Link of Seattle's Sound Transit plans a 5-station, 1.6-mile line that includes the main station of Tacoma Dome, with connections to Amtrak, Sounder commuter trains, and buses. Construction is already underway.

Caltrain ran its "Trains for Tots Special" trains down the San Francisco Peninsula in mid-Dec, visiting eight stations between S.F. and Santa Clara. The trains were decorated with over 15,000 lights and made 20-min stops for caroling. At stations, Santa Claus and friends like Frosty the Snowman and Rudolph waded through "huge" crowds to greet children. Golden Gate RR Museum volunteers decorated the train over a 5-week period. Caltrain provided a locomotive, two 50-yr old Budd cars and a 20-yr old bay-window caboose. The lights required 1000 feet of wire and used an electrical load of 100 amps—about that used in a modern home.

Over 4400 donated new toys were distributed to needy children through the US Marine Corps Toys for Tots Program.

Amtrak West advised Dec 21 that the UP Railroad had put 17 slow orders into effect between San Luis Obispo and Salinas on the *Coast Starlight* route, to be in effect until the end of 2001, at which time repairs would be made. The slow orders were causing train 14 to lose 1-2 hours time each day, during the heavy holiday season.

Seattle King Street station restoration is being postponed while the need for more tracks is being studied. The BNSF VP for passenger services told the Washington State Transportation Commission Dec 20 that more tracks for freight, Amtrak and Sound Transit trains will be needed. The station should re-open in 2003.



Portland Streetcar

BART is offering a $5 New Year's Eve Flash Pass that allows unlimited riding between 6pm Dec 31 and 3am Jan 1 and the agency is fielding longer trains, up to 10 cars, to handle the expected crowds. The Flash Passes are used by showing them to the station agent and entering through a swinging gate, without using the regular electronic gates.

The San Francisco Muni is offering free service on all its routes between 8pm New Year's Eve and 6am New Year's Day. Muni subway service will run until 4am. The city is holding a free New Year's Eve waterfront party on the Embarcadero, so huge crowds are expected.

Many people are skittish about flying these days, so at least one tour operator is suggesting ways to reach the tour without leaving the ground. World Explorer Cruises that runs Alaska cruises out of Vancouver BC is suggesting taking Amtrak to Seattle, where the operator will pick up guests and bus them to a Vancouver cruise terminal. They also mention the option of driving. The operator's Web site is at wecruise.com.

The *Capitol* Corridor, as reported last issue, celebrated its 10th anniversary on Dec 12 with a 10% off regular fares promo for the month of December. Also, the Kids Ride Free Promotion has been extended to Mar 25 (for kids 2-15).

Former Washington State DOT head Sid Morrison was honored by the American Ass'n of State & Highway Transportation Officials Dec 4 for his heavy involvement in the launching of the *Cascades* service.

With Salt Lake City in the news as the site of the Winter Olympics in Feb 2002, the city's TRAX light rail line from downtown to the University of Utah opened Dec 15. The line is 2.3 miles in length.

The Angels Flight funicular railway in Los Angeles reaches its 100th anniversary this New Year's Eve. But the operation remains closed since a Feb 1, 2001 accident that killed an elderly man and injured his wife. A $1 million L.A. City settlement in a suit resulting from that incident was reported concluded shortly before Christmas.

AMTRAK INTERCITY ON-TIME PERF FOR NOV, 2001

There was a marked improvement in endpoint on-time performance for Nov, with the overall Intercity total improving by about 10 percentage points.

Some improvements were expected. The *Texas Eagle's* schedule was lengthened in late Oct. Other improvements can perhaps be attributed to a drop in freight rail traffic due to the economic downturn. Note the good showing of the *Pennsylvanian* and *Three Rivers* and of the Eastern longhauls. With improvements posted by such former laggards as the *Sunset Limited*, *Texas Eagle* and *California Zephyr*, all having single-digit or zero perf in recent months, the booby prize belongs to the Michigan service. Lately, train 350 has been terminating its service at Dearborn, with guests transferred on the highway the last few miles to Detroit. A new schedule was implemented in Dec for Michigan, which may help.—Gene Poon.

Carolina Service.....59.2%
Silver Service.....40.8%

Atlantic Coast Total....52.6%

Auto Train.....75.0%

Capitol Limited.....57.5%
Cardinal.....38.5%
Kentucky Cardinal.....58.4%
Lake Shore Ltd.....77.6%
Pennsylvanian.....90.0%
Three Rivers.....92.0%

Eastern Service Total...78.3%

City Of New Orleans.....80.0%
Crescent.....76.7%

Gulf Coast Total.....78.3%

Hiawatha.....99.0%
Illinois/Missouri.....68.7%
Michigan.....24.6%

Midwest Corridor Total..67.2%

Heartland Flyer.....44.1%
Sunset East.....52.3%
Sunset West.....34.6%
Texas Eagle.....35.7%

Southwest Service Total.40.9%

California Zephyr.....61.6%
Empire Builder.....89.8%
Southwest Chief.....80.0%

Western Service Total...80.2%

Intercity Grand Total 66.4%

San Joaquin train 714 was involved in a tragic crossing wreck on Dec 12 when it struck a Ford Aerostar minivan near Shafter in northern Kern County at about 4pm. The van was crushed under the engine (unit 2012, an F59PHI recently put into service), and all seven occupants died. Two of them were thrown from the van. The victims were believed to be farm laborers.

Los Angeles Metrolink offered a 25% fare reduction on monthly passes in Dec.

The 100th anniversary of the worst ferry boat accident on San Francisco Bay was Nov 30. The ferries "Sausalito" and "San Rafael" collided, killing three people. The incident was immortalized by Jack London in his novel "The Sea-Wolf".

Orange County CA transit officials recently approved a 20-mile light rail alignment within the cities of Irvine, Costa Mesa and Santa Ana.

San Francisco Muni wants to lend 50 new buses to Salt Lake City for the coming Winter Olympics, at no charge.

The Oregonian newspaper reported that Portland Airport MAX light rail trains ran as 2-car units Nov 25, and might do the same at Christmas. The airport extension is drawing 3400 rides per day and the seven 1-car trains carry 7300 riders daily, overlapping MAX Gresham-Hillsboro now from downtown Portland to Gateway, where the Airport route branches off.

SF Bay Area projects with funding included in the DOT appropriations bill just finalized are an installment of the BART extension to SF airport, Golden Gate Bridge retrofitting, Muni bus air quality improvements, Altamont Commuter Express ($3 million), AC Transit programs, Treasure Island ferry service ($2 million), and SF Presidio shuttle bus system.

Amtrak's crew base in L.A. laid off more train attendants in early Dec. At that time the *Coast Starlight* was down to two sleepers from three, a cut not supposed to happen until after Jan 1.

San Francisco Muni Railway is finally retiring its Boeing-Vertol light rail vehicles. The cars, which were wracked with problems when they were new and gathered more problems as they aged, have been replaced by new Breda cars. Eight Bredas were accepted in mid-Dec, allowing the retirement of the vehicles.—Gene Poon.

Safeway will open a supermarket on Fourth Street, across from the San Francisco Caltrain station. The project will be completed by July 2003 and will include 595 apartments, offices and retail outlets and parking spaces.

BART plans to set aside long-term paid parking spaces at the El Cerrito del Norte, North Concord/Martinez and Hayward stations for travelers going to San Francisco International Airport when BART service to that facility begins. BART plans to allow users to donate small-denomination left-over tickets to a charitable foundation.

RAIL CANADA

RTN reported last issue on the threat to the *Malahat Dayliner*, the VIA train on Vancouver Island, on the E&N Railway. To recap, RailAmerica, owner of the E&N, is discontinuing freight service Jan 1, and giving notice that in two months beyond that date the *Dayliner* will be terminated, unless new arrangements are made.

Now an online petition has been worked up and can be seen on the Web at www.petitiononline.com/en2099/petition.html. Those interested in saving the passenger train can view the petition and add their names to it. Among prominent petitioners are Tyler Welsford (enrailway@hotmail.com) and Carl Fowler (railvt@sover.net). Fowler notes that "Ironically, VIA has just rebuilt the equipment for this train, but it is threatened because of the impending loss of freight service on the E&N Railway. It's harder in Canada than in the USA to get a political outcry started on this sort of thing, but VIA has publicly stated their desire to continue to run this service. If you are willing, I hope you'll support this petition with a signature and forwarding to other rail passenger advocates."

Responding to the letter (see p. 20) about the border crossing situation for *International* train passengers, Transport 2000's Harry Gow told a media rep, "It is surprising that the Customs and Immigration officials have such a crude Iran/Iraq approach, when we know that at Vancouver a special facility was built at the Intermodal Passenger Terminal for US-bound Amtrak *Cascades* services... The Government of Canada is about to spend billions of dollars on road border crossings and on air security, but not a cent on rail."

Helena Borges, Director of Rail Policy at Transport Canada, wrote Gow that "VIA Rail and Transport Canada officials have been in discussions with US counterparts and our Dept of Foreign Affairs in an attempt to address the inconvenient situation for rail passengers crossing at Sarnia." Borges said that officials would continue their efforts to address the problem, but made no specific promises.

VIA Rail Canada on Dec 4 denied that its new Renaissance passenger cars are not accessible to handicapped persons. VIA said in a release that while the new cars are not identical to others in its fleet, "they are accessible to passengers with mobility restrictions" and that all VIA's trains are accessible. The statement came in response to criticism from reps on handicapped organizations.

VIA Rail train 76 had rocks thrown at it in London, Ontario on Dec 4. The engineer was struck in the face by broken glass when the engine's windshield was broken. The train stopped at London and the engineer was taken to a hospital, where he was treated and released. A window on the first passenger car was also cracked, but no other injuries were reported. Damage to the train was reported at about $1500. Police denounced the act and said they will watch the area closely for any new suspects.

Transport 2000 Canada on Dec 7 wrote to Transport Minister David Collenette suggesting ways to save the Budd car service on Vancouver Island. The advocacy group suggested that the federal and provincial governments set up a nonprofit Railway Authority for Vancouver Island to take over the assets of the railway that is to be abandoned and manage and develop the rail passenger service. T-2000 said it is urgent that the total railway infrastructure, including the harbour connection in Nanaimo, remain intact.

Sunrise to Sunset on Florida's Rails

By Jack M. Turner Photos by the author

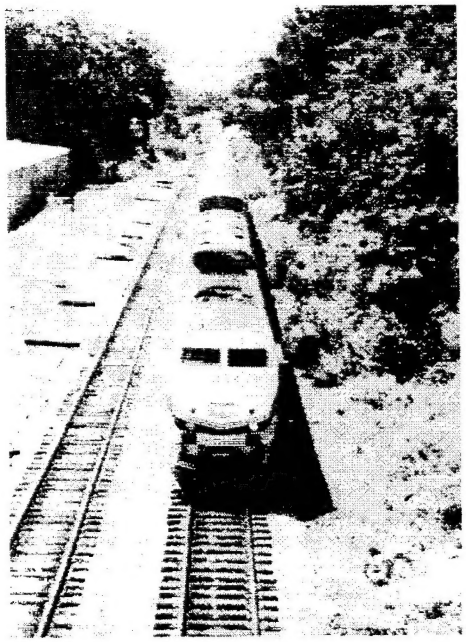
Sandwiched around a family rail journey to Atlantic Canada in June, as previously reported in RTN, were a couple of shorter trips in our native Florida. In mid-May son John and I thought "Wouldn't It Be Nice" to take a short ride from Madison FL to Tallahassee aboard the westbound *Sunset Limited*. That trip coincided with attendance the previous night at an outdoor concert by America's Band, the Beach Boys (my personal favorite) at Wild Adventures Theme Park outside Valdosta GA. That hour-long trip was "Fun, Fun, Fun" but "Shut Down" all too soon.

In late September we decided to "Do It Again", this time heading eastward on the *Sunset* from Chipley FL to Tallahassee, passing North Florida "Cotton Fields" en route back to Florida's capital city. Two weeks later we again were soaking up the Beach Boys' "Good Vibrations" as they surfed through a 37-song set during an indoor show in Tallahassee. Somehow all the cheerful car and beach songs made me think about California, which eventually translated to the need to ride Florida's California connection, the *Sunset Limited*, again.

A late October return from Miami thus provided the perfect chance to "Catch A Wave" homeward, in this case in the form of the train. Schedule modifications several months ago necessitated an early 7am departure from Miami; however, as this trip was set for Sunday, Oct 28, I lucked into an extra hour of sleep as the clocks were set back to Standard Time overnight.

Nevertheless, I booked a standard bedroom on the *Silver Meteor* to Jacksonville to allow privacy, an afternoon nap, and included meals. Business was comparatively light in Miami, as October is typically a shoulder season between the busy summer and winter Florida tourist seasons.

Nearing its 63rd birthday, the *Silver Meteor* today remains the flagship of the Florida passenger train fleet. Sleeper "Ocean View" would fill to about 50% capacity within a couple of hours, and there appeared to be a few more passengers in the "Northern View", one car forward. The latter had coincidentally been my family's



The eastbound *Sunset Limited* passes through Tallahassee FL in October, 2001.

sleeper on our last overnight trip, on the *Twilight Shoreliner*, back in July.

As I settled "In My Room" (standard bedroom 1), the *Meteor* began its navigation of the Hialeah Yards, in which the Amtrak station is located. My thoughts drifted back to the 1960s and '70s when the *Silver Meteor* left Miami at a more civilized 9am. Back in those days I happily grabbed a seat in the rear of a Seaboard observation car, whereas today I would be spoiled in a sleeper. I must confess that the Viewliner sleepers have grown on me, as the addition of a window by the upper berth and a shower down the hall are improvements over the vintage Heritage fleet. The old roomette was my favorite accommodation; however, the airy Viewliners have been positive in many ways.

The ride through South Florida basically parallels Interstate 95 as far as West

San Francisco Muni Railway is finally retiring its Boeing-Vertol light rail vehicles. The cars, which were wracked with problems when they were new and gathered more problems as they aged, have been replaced by new Breda cars. Eight Bredas were accepted in mid-Dec, allowing the retirement of the vehicles.—Gene Poon.

Safeway will open a supermarket on Fourth Street, across from the San Francisco Caltrain station. The project will be completed by July 2003 and will include 595 apartments, offices and retail outlets and parking spaces.

BART plans to set aside long-term paid parking spaces at the El Cerrito del Norte, North Concord/Martinez and Hayward stations for travelers going to San Francisco International Airport when BART service to that facility begins. BART plans to allow users to donate small-denomination left-over tickets to a charitable foundation.

RAIL CANADA

RTN reported last issue on the threat to the *Malahat Dayliner*, the VIA train on Vancouver Island, on the E&N Railway. To recap, RailAmerica, owner of the E&N, is discontinuing freight service Jan 1, and giving notice that in two months beyond that date the *Dayliner* will be terminated, unless new arrangements are made.

Now an online petition has been worked up and can be seen on the Web at www.petitiononline.com/en2099/petition.html. Those interested in saving the passenger train can view the petition and add their names to it. Among prominent petitioners are Tyler Welsford (enrailway@hotmail.com) and Carl Fowler (railvt@sover.net). Fowler notes that "Ironically, VIA has just rebuilt the equipment for this train, but it is threatened because of the impending loss of freight service on the E&N Railway. It's harder in Canada than in the USA to get a political outcry started on this sort of thing, but VIA has publicly stated their desire to continue to run this service. If you are willing, I hope you'll support this petition with a signature and forwarding to other rail passenger advocates."

Responding to the letter (see p. 20) about the border crossing situation for *International* train passengers, Transport 2000's Harry Gow told a media rep, "It is surprising that the Customs and Immigration officials have such a crude Iran/Iraq approach, when we know that at Vancouver a special facility was built at the Intermodal Passenger Terminal for US-bound Amtrak *Cascades* services... The Government of Canada is about to spend billions of dollars on road border crossings and on air security, but not a cent on rail."

Helena Borges, Director of Rail Policy at Transport Canada, wrote Gow that "VIA Rail and Transport Canada officials have been in discussions with US counterparts and our Dept of Foreign Affairs in an attempt to address the inconvenient situation for rail passengers crossing at Sarnia." Borges said that officials would continue their efforts to address the problem, but made no specific promises.

VIA Rail Canada on Dec 4 denied that its new Renaissance passenger cars are not accessible to handicapped persons. VIA said in a release that while the new cars are not identical to others in its fleet, "they are accessible to passengers with mobility restrictions" and that all VIA's trains are accessible. The statement came in response to criticism from reps on handicapped organizations.

VIA Rail train 76 had rocks thrown at it in London, Ontario on Dec 4. The engineer was struck in the face by broken glass when the engine's windshield was broken. The train stopped at London and the engineer was taken to a hospital, where he was treated and released. A window on the first passenger car was also cracked, but no other injuries were reported. Damage to the train was reported at about $1500. Police denounced the act and said they will watch the area closely for any new suspects.

Transport 2000 Canada on Dec 7 wrote to Transport Minister David Collenette suggesting ways to save the Budd car service on Vancouver Island. The advocacy group suggested that the federal and provincial governments set up a nonprofit Railway Authority for Vancouver Island to take over the assets of the railway that is to be abandoned and manage and develop the rail passenger service. T-2000 said it is urgent that the total railway infrastructure, including the harbour connection in Nanaimo, remain intact.

Sunrise to Sunset on Florida's Rails

By Jack M. Turner Photos by the author

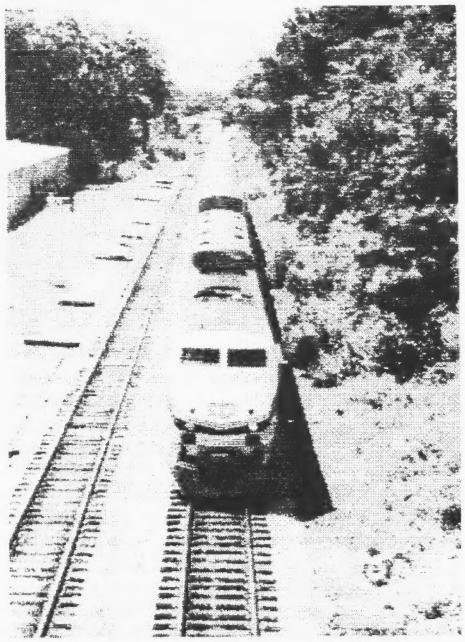
Sandwiched around a family rail journey to Atlantic Canada in June, as previously reported in RTN, were a couple of shorter trips in our native Florida. In mid-May son John and I thought "Wouldn't It Be Nice" to take a short ride from Madison FL to Tallahassee aboard the westbound *Sunset Limited*. That trip coincided with attendance the previous night at an outdoor concert by America's Band, the Beach Boys (my personal favorite) at Wild Adventures Theme Park outside Valdosta GA. That hour-long trip was "Fun, Fun, Fun" but "Shut Down" all too soon.

In late September we decided to "Do It Again", this time heading eastward on the *Sunset* from Chipley FL to Tallahassee, passing North Florida "Cotton Fields" en route back to Florida's capital city. Two weeks later we again were soaking up the Beach Boys' "Good Vibrations" as they surfed through a 37-song set during an indoor show in Tallahassee. Somehow all the cheerful car and beach songs made me think about California, which eventually translated to the need to ride Florida's California connection, the *Sunset Limited*, again.

A late October return from Miami thus provided the perfect chance to "Catch A Wave" homeward, in this case in the form of the train. Schedule modifications several months ago necessitated an early 7am departure from Miami; however, as this trip was set for Sunday, Oct 28, I lucked into an extra hour of sleep as the clocks were set back to Standard Time overnight.

Nevertheless, I booked a standard bedroom on the *Silver Meteor* to Jacksonville to allow privacy, an afternoon nap, and included meals. Business was comparatively light in Miami, as October is typically a shoulder season between the busy summer and winter Florida tourist seasons.

Nearing its 63rd birthday, the *Silver Meteor* today remains the flagship of the Florida passenger train fleet. Sleeper "Ocean View" would fill to about 50% capacity within a couple of hours, and there appeared to be a few more passengers in the "Northern View", one car forward. The latter had coincidentally been my family's



The eastbound *Sunset Limited* passes through Tallahassee FL in October, 2001.

sleeper on our last overnight trip, on the *Twilight Shoreliner*, back in July.

As I settled "In My Room" (standard bedroom 1), the *Meteor* began its navigation of the Hialeah Yards, in which the Amtrak station is located. My thoughts drifted back to the 1960s and '70s when the *Silver Meteor* left Miami at a more civilized 9am. Back in those days I happily grabbed a seat in the rear of a Seaboard observation car, whereas today I would be spoiled in a sleeper. I must confess that the Viewliner sleepers have grown on me, as the addition of a window by the upper berth and a shower down the hall are improvements over the vintage Heritage fleet. The old roomette was my favorite accommodation; however, the airy Viewliners have been positive in many ways.

The ride through South Florida basically parallels Interstate 95 as far as West

Train 2, engine 1: The eastbound *Sunset Limited*, train 2, pauses at the Tallahassee FL station in October, 2001, behind P42 engine 1.

Palm Beach and allows glimpses of numerous canals, adjacent golf courses and a variety of warehouses that are interesting because of the rail sidings that wander off to those facilities. Heading north, odd-numbered rooms, all located on the right side, provide the best views of these features. Three of the first four stations north of Miami are located on the left; however, the vacant room across the hall offered a fine view of the restored depots in Hollywood and Ft. Lauderdale. Between those two cities we passed Hollywood-Ft. Lauderdale International Airport, and a twin-engined commuter plane lifted off above the rear of our train. When the wind comes from the east, landing planes pass just above the train, and through the years I have witnessed many a passenger jolted as a 727 buzzed the train. Given the events of Sep 11, this is a thrill best missed on this trip.

Soon I was welcomed into the diner for breakfast as we departed Deerfield Beach, our third stop out of Miami. Diner 8558 was shopworn on the exterior but has been refurbished inside with low-back gray seats and a pleasant appearance. The wait staff was cordial and efficient in serving the morning meal. A new menu for Florida's three Silver Service trains provided numerous dining selections and bore a picture of an Amtrak train at an unidentifiable station. This harkens back to the late 1960s and early '70s when Seaboard Coast Line's diner menus featured pictures of Florida beaches, Cypress Gardens and other popular destinations. The back cover provided a brief history of the state's passenger trains.

While in a reflective mood, I recalled countless round trips between Miami and West Palm Beach during my childhood and teenage years. Back then that short 90-min trip seemed like a big adventure as I rode the SAL and SCL's finest streamliners along with Illinois Central's chocolate-colored *City of Miami* and Pennsylvania Railroad's *South Wind*.

A couple hundred thousand rail miles later, these trips seem oh so brief, yet carry fond memories of rides with my dad, my brother, friends and eventually with dates. The round-end observation cars on the *Meteor* and the *City* were always my favorites, but in the late pre-Amtrak years were augmented by dome cars on the *City of Miami*, *South Wind* and *Florida Special*. The *Meteor* also carried a unique sun-lounge sleeper with windows in its roof, similar to today's Amtrak Superliner lounges, and occasionally a friendly conductor would allow me to ride in the sun-lounge.

The West Palm Beach station has been spiffed up greatly in recent years and today is serving Tri-Rail, Amtrak and Greyhound. The current Amtrak waiting room used to be the baggage room while the old passenger area now is occupied by bus patrons. The renovation of this attractive station is in keeping with the restoration of most of the other former SAL stations on this line. The Miami SAL station was replaced by the current Amtrak station long ago to eliminate a long deadhead move to the yard and improve security.

Beyond West Palm the *Meteor* traverses tangent track that makes a beeline for the inland towns of Okeechobee and Sebring. This stretch is dominated by scrub brush and pine trees and provided an excellent opportunity to nap in the upper bed. This would be my first chance to recline in a Viewliner standard room upper bed, as this was a rare solo trip, and I found the ride comfortable. Better yet, the window beside the upper bed is positioned just right for viewing passing scenery. Deluxe and accessible bedrooms are arranged with beds facing the windows, a setup less conducive to looking out the window.

My rest was interrupted to watch the southbound *Silver Palm* zip past just south of Okeechobee at 9:50am; then I drifted off until Sebring. The stretch from Sebring to Winter Haven has always been a favorite of mine, as the rails pass through lush orange groves and wind along the stores of numerous lakes.

At Auburndale the *Silver Meteor* leaves its old home rails and switches onto the old Atlantic Coast Line route coming over from Tampa. The interchange proceeded seamlessly this trip as power switches and dwarf signals now expedite this maneuver, which used to be a start and stop switch-throwing ordeal.

Lunch was called as we neared Kissimmee, and my tablemate, Lou, provided a riveting description of his September 11 experience as he watched the World Trade Center burn from the balcony of his Manhattan apartment. As Lou described that day's lockdown of the Big Apple, I noted reports of that evening's southbound *Meteor* being able to operate and a newspaper article that chronicled many friendships forged aboard the train that night. Indeed, the "Spirit of America" is alive and well.

The southbound *Silver Star* rolled past at 12:20pm, followed by the day's third rock train to pass. A few moments later we pulled into Orlando, where a typically large crowd waited to board. The Orlando station is one of the state's most recognizable, as it resembles an old Moorish castle.

Departing that station, the northbound *Silver Meteor* edged through the urban Orlando landscape with numerous grade crossings acting as bookends enveloping office buildings, parking garages and the Church Street Station entertainment district, where several old rail passenger cars are permanently parked adjacent to the main line. The brief stop in Winter Park displayed a Sunday afternoon scene of children and their fathers interrupting games of catch to watch the sleek silver streamliner pause at the station across the tracks from the charming downtown park.

Continuing through the northern suburbs of Orlando, a disturbing though occurred to me: the *Sunset Limited* was nowhere to be seen. I would be transferring to the westbound *Sunset* in Jacksonville, so its whereabouts were of utmost import-

The author's northbound *Silver Meteor* (right), is refueled and serviced during its stop in Jacksonville on Oct 28. The P42 engine and mail cars at left are waiting for the evening's northbound *Silver Star*.

ance to me. Normally, it would have been met somewhere near the Orlando station after it deadheaded from Sanford and turned on a wye near Taft Yard. It was 1:02pm as we passed through Maitland, 22mins north of Orlando, and train #1 was scheduled to depart Orlando at 1:15pm. Soon the CSX radio channel came to life with word that the *Sunset* was still in the *Auto Train* yard at Sanford with a plumbing problem. A major delay was not inevitable.

I again appreciated my east-facing room when we departed Sanford, as I could view the proceedings as vehicles were loaded into autoracks for their *Auto Train* journey to Virginia. The *Sunset Limited*, meanwhile, sat rather forlornly as it waited out its delay. Beyond Sanford the scene outside the train window again reflected rural Florida as we crossed the St. Johns River and headed off into groves of oak and pine trees. Several more guests were welcomed aboard at DeLand, home of Stetson University and the closest stop to Daytona Beach.

Almost an hour later we again crossed the St. Johns and halted in Palatka, the closest station to St. Augustine. Both that city and Daytona Beach will be directly served if and when Amtrak succeeds in re-routing a train down the Florida East Coast line.

As always, the entrance to Jacksonville was interesting, as several engaging sights stood just outside the window: a private rail car yard housing five or six pieces of private varnish at Orange Park, the Jacksonville Naval Air Station near Yukon, a marina berthing expensive yachts at Doctor's Inlet, views of the downtown Jacksonville skyline and the junction with the FEC, sweeping Honeymoon Wye where the CSX line to the west joins, and the CSX Moncrief Yard.

At 3:41pm, 8mins late, we pulled to a stop at Jacksonville's suburban Amtrak station. Immediately, a leased yard switcher, newly painted in Amtrak silver, began the process of adding to string of express cars to the rear of the *Silver Meteor* while a fuel truck prepared to service the locomotive. Across the platform, another P42 engine and a couple of mail cars waited to be cut into the northbound *Silver Star* due about three hours later. A string of RoadRailers stood poised farther south on that track, also waiting for the *Star*.

The *Silver Meteor* made an on-time departure at 4pm, leaving behind 50 or so guests connecting to the *Sunset Limited*. Meanwhile, the switcher was marshaling six express cars onto the track vacated by the *Meteor* as they would be attached to the rear of the *Sunset*. The Los Angeles-bound train backed in at 6:15pm, 90mins late, coupled onto the express cars, and began accepting passengers. I was disappointed when the coach attendant rejected my request for a window seat despite my being first to board. The vast majority of previous trips on train #1 had seen open seating permitted, which seems reasonable when the train is not sold out, as was the case this trip.

Knowing that the dining car might be crowded, I stowed my luggage and headed straight to the dining car, where I was seated with Bill and Carolyn, an outgoing couple from Southern California. They had come East a few days earlier, their first extended train trip since World War II, and were enjoying the experience of traveling by sleeper. The lateness of our train was perplexing to them, since they boarded at its origination point, Orlando, where they expected it to be timely. As it turned out, due to the late departure, lunch was not served, but luckily they had found a nearby sandwich shop, unlike many of their fellow passengers. The delay in Sanford had been the result of a problem in finding a substitute crew car, as the only available transition sleeper was turned the wrong way. Eventually, *Auto Train* managers were instructed to utilize a deluxe sleeper normally used exclusively on the *Auto Train*.

Despite Bill's efforts, it was impossible to force a smile on the face of our server, who apparently was tired from the late eastbound arrival in the wee hours of the morning. Her snail-like pace contributed to a 45-min wait for dinner, which certainly is not the image the New Amtrak wishes to convey.

My steak dinner was delicious and perfectly cooked, upholding the reputation of typically tasty *Sunset Limited* cuisine.

West of Jacksonville, the *Sunset* normally would make a beeline toward the setting sun; however, its tardiness this day made the westward journey in darkness. We had lost a few more minutes departing the Jacksonville station, awaiting the passage of the northbound *Auto Train* on the main line.

At Baldwin we reached the point where the CSX "S" Line (ex-Seaboard) branches off for Miami and Tampa and clanked across the diamond crossing SAL's Baldwin Cutoff line bypassing Jacksonville. As we reached our next stop, Lake City, the movie crowd was clearing out of the lounge car, which invited a visit for improved viewing of the nighttime sights. The piney woods of North Florida were occasionally interrupted by passage through small towns such as Live Oak and Lee, while the red tail lights of automobiles on parallel US Highway 90 made for an impromptu race as we headed westward.

The next stop, Madison, is home to a unique gazebo-style train shelter constructed just before the *Sunset Limited* was extended from New Orleans to Miami in Apr 1993. A commemorative plaque still welcomes "Amtrack" to Madison. Only a half hour north of this stop is Wild Adventures Theme Park, a 170-acre amusement park featuring various rides including several roller coasters, log flumes and kiddy rides plus a mile-long train ride through an interesting wildlife preserve. On selected weekends, Wild Adventures hosts major musical acts such as the Beach Boys, whom we saw there on a balmy Friday night in May. Rail action can be found in nearby Clyattville, home of the Valdosta Railway, and in adjacent Valdosta, where Norfolk Southern and CSX freight lines cross. For information about Wild Adventures, call (229) 559-1330. Amtrak passengers should use the stop in Tallahassee to access this region, as Madison has no rental car facilities.

Fifteen minutes west of Madison we crossed a lightly used NS branch line at Greenville, then slowed for an interesting meet at Aucilla at 9:40pm. The scanner advised that we would be passing a wide load train which, on this line, often means a shipment of solid rocket boosters for the space shuttle. Normally the boosters are hauled in the consist of a CSX double stack train, but on this night they were being handled in a special train pulled by Kansas City Southern engines along with their usual escort car "Hialeah" (a former SAL and Amtrak 11-bedroom sleeper) and a few spacer cars (box cars used to space out the heavy load). The special movement was obviously in response to September 11, as NASA has increased security for its shuttle program.

A half-hour later we eased to a stop on the siding at Chaires to meet eastbound CSX intermodal Q102. After a 10-min delay we resumed the final 15-min run to Tallahassee for a 110-min late arrival at 10:35 pm. The tardy *Sunset Limited* was an anomaly westbound, but pointed out the need for smoother resolution of equipment issues.

Despite this inconvenience, the Miami to Tallahassee journey was most pleasant with the *Silver Meteor* performing exceptionally and the *Sunset* offering a much more comfortable and relaxing trip than would have been possible by automobile.

THE CANDY CANE EXPRESS AND OTHER NE CORRIDOR ENTER-TRAINMENTS

By Bob Underwood

The first Sunday of December, Dec 2 this year, marks the annual run of the Candy Cane Express from New Haven CT to Stamford and return, for children and their families who are suffering from diseases of the blood or other cancers. The train usually picks up Santa at Milford, and as the train rolls along, the children can tell him what they want to Christmas. Santa and his many helpers also distribute snacks and toys en route.

I arrived at New Haven Union Station shortly before 1pm to find a Shore Line East train sitting on track 3. GP40 engine 6699 was at the west end of the train, with a large wreath on the front. Behind it were SPV coaches 1627, 1621, 1631 and 1625, cab car 1671 and lounge-cab car 1001.

Track 1, across the platform, would soon become very busy. P40 #825 came through and would be the east engine for train 56, the *Vermonter*. No. 56 was due in at 1:05pm and came in on time with AEM7 949, coaches 44691, 82507, 82510, 82511 and "food service car" 48151, behind which was baggage 1222. The regular "V Bag" was not on the train this date. The 949 was uncoupled and moved east so the P40 could couple on. P40 813 was attached to the rear. The train left on time at 1:20pm.

With #56 barely out of sight, *Acela Express* train 2250 was announced for track 1, but before he arrived, #56's engine came down track 1 headed for motor storage. I couldn't help thinking "cornfield meet", but there was none.

(continued on page 19)

MIXED TRAIN OF THOUGHTS

Amtrak's wall calendar for 2002 is shown at the right. The calendar is similar in design to the 2001 calendar and seems to be printed in blue (though we haven't seen the actual calendar yet). Pictured is an *Acela Express* train with power car 2002 near the camera. The car number forms the year date of the calendar. The calendar's numbering and lettering is probably in white, as in 2001.

Copies can be ordered from Amtrak Marketing Distribution, PO Box 7717, Itasca IL 60143-7717. Prices include shipping costs. One calendar costs $6, two for $10, three for $14, four for $16, five for $18, etc. Payment is by check or money order (payable to Amtrak) or credit card (no cash).

Calendars from previous years are available: 1980, 1981, 1983-6, 1988-91, 1993-8 and 2000-2001. The price of these is $3 each for 1-5, $2 each for 6-25 and $1.50 each for 26-50.

From the calendar proportions it appears that the numbers are the same size as in 2001, which was better than 2000, when their small size made them difficult to read from a distance for some people.

Coach shortages plague holiday Amtrak service: The eastbound *Southwest Chief*, train 4 of Dec 20, was supposed to have a third coach for the heavy holiday traffic. The car was coming out on train 3 of Dec 18, but that trainset get turned back due to a BNSF wreck in New Mexico (see p.7). L.A. had no extra coaches at all, so the train left there with two lounges. One of them, unstaffed, was for revenue coach passengers, who would have low-backed non-reclining seats as a result. Seats in the regular lounge would also be needed to handle coach passengers on the fully-booked train out of L.A. and again between Kansas City and Chicago.

The westbound *Southwest Chief*, train 3 of Dec 20, had one full coach and two smoker coaches, so was short of the full complement of seats it normally gets with two full coaches and one smoker coach. Some revenue passengers would be forced to sit in a lounge car overnight.

The southbound *Coast Starlight*, train 11 of Dec 20, was short one coach out of Seattle. Amtrak took two short-haul Horizon coaches from the Seattle Seahawks trainset and added them to the *Starlight* in front of the transition dorm car. The coach passengers in these Horizons had cramped seating and had to walk through the dorm, three sleepers and the Parlour Car to reach the diner and lounge. Not only is that a long walk, but coach passengers were thus getting access to the Parlour, which is supposed to be for first class sleepers only.

The eastbound *Lake Shore Limited*, train 48 of Dec 18, was sent out with a Horizon coach because the set had an anthrax scare while westbound. The involved Amfleet II coach was set out in Chicago to be cleaned and disinfected. There were no spare coaches in Chicago, so the train went out with a short-haul Horizon coach in its place.—Gene Poon.

Superliner lounge 33104, rebuilt from a diner, was seen Dec 5 on train 2. The car has no wraparound windows in the roof. The exterior was labeled "lounge" and the car numbers were black rather than blue. The lower level had windows unlike Superliner diners and there were seats and tables inside. A conductor said a smoking lounge was downstairs. The car is part of the *Auto Train* fleet.—Jack Turner.

A northbound *Capitol* train struck two people sitting on the track in Berkeley CA at Gilman St Dec 16, just north of the Berkeley station. The train was annulled and guests shifted to another train.

Conrail's first chairman and CEO, Edward G. Jordan, died at age 72 in California on Dec 26.

Dallas' Trinity Express, which expanded Dec 3 to two stations in downtown Fort Worth, proved to be more popular than expected. On Dec 27 there was insufficient room for the crowds who appeared at midday in Fort Worth. The line serves commuters and riders to special events.

Michael Dukakis, Amtrak interim board chairman, spent Dec 19 in Chicago lobbying for high-speed rail development. Chicago Tribune reporter Mike Conklin followed him around and reported for his paper. In a radio interview he talked about plane vs. train safety, saying "You can't put a gun to an engineer's head and say 'Take me to Havana.'" He told a large group of Amtrak employees at Union Station, "We're very sensitive and we don't want it perceived we're out there wallowing in the tragic events of 9/11, but it just so happens that in our Northeast Corridor we were scheduled to put on two additional *Acela* lines in late September. When we made those announcements then, I never got press interest like I did for them. Everybody was there. There is obviously a lot more interest in rail travel."

Joe Vranich has been heard from again with his personal vendetta against Amtrak still showing. In a Dec 23 article in the Washington Post, he tries not to sound anti-passenger train, claiming in the article title that "I got Amtrak moving" when he was with NARP in the early 1970s. But now, he says, he's "still a champion of passenger trains" and he "could still favor government funding to keep the trains running—on one condition: that not a penny of it goes to Amtrak."

Vranich is arguing for eliminating the long-distance trains and concentrating on corridors and short routes. Amtrak's fundamental problem, he says, is that it has "squandered billions of dollars on unsalvageable long-distance routes that carry an infinitesimal number of people."

Near the end of the article he admits, oddly, that his gripes are about Amtrak the organization and not about trains: "For me, this is no longer about trains. It's about setting the record straight on an entity that I now know is a dud. I regret my long role as an outspoken Amtrak ally. Today, I believe the only way to make passenger trains relevant is by making Amtrak irrelevant."

He's being oddly honest here and admitting in a way that his gripe is really about his former relationship with Amtrak, when he served in its Public Affairs Dept. But he's going around like a loose cannon trying to damage passenger train service for all Americans. (RTN's analysis.)

It's hardly fair for Congress to insist that Amtrak become self-sufficient by the end of 2002, when Congress has not fulfilled its promise to give Amtrak $5 billion for new equipment and to grow its business, said an op-ed article by Ben Ali released by the AP. Said Ali, "Congress has appropriated barely half that amount. Amtrak is being punished because Congress has not held up its end of the deal".

The 44-mile long Dakota Rail Railroad near Minneapolis is being sold by RailAmerica to Hennepin County, MN for $7.6 million. That county will re-establish freight service that RailAmerica ended about a year ago.

Amtrak will announce a Winter Free Companion Promotion, available beginning Jan 2, 2002. Under the promo, the first passenger pays full adult fare (or Veterans Advantage or Student Advantage, if the person is a qualifying member of those programs; no other discounts, such as senior, AAA, NARP, etc. can be taken) and the companion rides free.

The plan is valid for reservations and new purchase from Jan 2 to Feb 21, and valid for travel Jan 9-Feb 28. Tickets are nonrefundable. Blackout dates are Feb 15-18, and on trains 1-2, 19-20 & 58-59 Jan 31-Feb 4. It's not valid on *Acela Express*, Metroliner, *Auto Train*, Thruway buses 7000-8999 or Fri-Sun peak *Acela Regional* trains. It is valid also for business class and sleeper travel.

Note: You must ask for this plan; an Amtrak agent will not suggest it to you.

The Channel Tunnel was shut down for a third time the night of Dec 25 when several hundred refugees being held at a camp in Sangatte, France, attempted to walk the 33 miles to England through the Channel Tunnel. They were stopped by French and English police.

The Colorado DOT is finally applying to the federal government for high-speed rail corridor designation for the Fort Collins to Pueblo route. ColoRail has urged C-DOT to do so for two years, and now realize they have accomplished a significant milestone in Colorado passenger rail development.

The C-DOT application got in too late to be recorded in 2001, but it will be submitted again early in 2002, when the FRA reopens the process.

The process will re-open when the DOT and FRA complete an administration report and plan for US passenger rail, which will function as recommendations to Congress. No one seems to know yet what the administration will propose, as the administration has not yet taken a public position on the matter.

(This page was misaligned like this in the original source copy of RTN. Cannot be fixed in the page scan - 2021-09-24) - PR

NARP said in a Dec 21 release: "Although Congress adjourned without passing a stimulus bill, prospects for high speed rail legislation next year benefit from a developing consensus on the form of such legislation. One reflection of that: The version included in the stimulus bill passed by the Senate Finance Committee closely tracks with provisions in HR 2329.

Meanwhile, November maintained the pattern of increased market share for Amtrak. Compared with one year ago, airline ridership and average fares fell sharply, while Amtrak nationwide ridership was flat and passenger revenues were up. The economic context includes a record 5.7% unemployment rate, and a 15-17% drop in US hotel room revenues vs. a year ago.

On domestic routes, 'enplanements' dropped 19.5%. The average fare (normalized for a 1000-mile trip) fell 16.3% to $123.68 (figures in this sentence exclude only Southwest Airlines).

Systemwide, Amtrak ridership dropped 0.5%, while ticket revenues increased 14%. Total NE Corridor ridership was 'essentially flat,' but higher-fare *Acela Express* and Metroliner products had ridership and revenue increases of 40% and 66%, respectively. Nationwide, sleeping-car ridership and revenues increased 1% and 11%, respectively, with about 60% of all departures sold out in either or both of the standard or deluxe rooms...

Bonds for investments in high-speed rail would have the type of immediate economic stimulus the country needs and that are the intent of the [economic stimulus] legislation... Each million dollars invested in infrastructure projects such as rail generates approximately 42,000 jobs. Moreover, every dollar spent on infrastructure has a multiplier effect of 3-5 times, amplifying the economic benefit of the investments."

Congress has decided that Amtrak does not have to prepare a plan for its own liquidation. This provision came in the 2002 defense appropriations bill passed on Dec 20. That sword hanging over Amtrak's head was hurting its relationships with creditors and others. The bill also includes $100 million for Amtrak to make safety improvements in its New York tunnels.

NEWS IN THIS ISSUE IS UPDATED THROUGH DEC 28, 2001.
Contributors to this issue not otherwise identified include Robert Abraham, Jon Esty, Alan Feinstein, Jack Ferry, Harry Gow, Glenn Lee, Ken Maylath, Chuck Newton, Gene Poon, Ray Saunders, Barry Steinberg, Ed Von Nordeck and Walter Zullig.

Although Amtrak does not have to build its own scaffold, the Amtrak Reform Council will still issue a report on the rail corporation in Feb, to be considered by Congress along with Administration recommendations. But a Reform Council member, Milwaukee Mayor John Norquist, told Newsday "I think it will be a pretty positive, pro-passenger report. It won't be meant as a way to destroy Amtrak." Among the Council's recommendations is expected to be support for another penny of gas tax for Amtrak.

Patronage of the *Downeaster* has been so heavy that a coach was added to the midday trains (684 & 685) after Christmas, making them five-car trains.—Gene Poon.

Congress passed the DOT appropriations bill before adjourning for Christmas vacation. The bill includes the requested $521 million for Amtrak, and with the provision that Amtrak can access all the money immediately.

Amtrak train 174, with engine 910 and 11 cars, derailed the engine and first car at Canton Jct, a Boston suburb, at 6pm Dec 27. The low-speed incident disrupted Corridor traffic and trapped a train on the Stoughton Branch. That train was used for shuttling passengers back and forth. As of 8am the next morning, only Track 1 was open, with a 30mph restriction, creating a considerable bottleneck. The equipment was in a difficult spot for re-railing, in the cut leading to the Chapman St. bridge.

FREE 18-PAGE SUPPLEMENT to Gordon Gill's 1999 book *Amtrak's Long-Distance Service: Can It Be Made Viable?* Is now available to anyone asking. It reflects a heavy emphasis upon the inability of Amtrak's highway and air competitors to satisfy all of this nation's passenger transport needs. Write to this address: 5109 Columbia Road, Annandale, Virginia 22003.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK***

"The initiative to restore passenger rail service has been in progress for more than ten years, beginning with the largest citizen's petition drive in Maine's history. Ordinary citizens demonstrated an extraordinary belief in the value of rail service in building our economy, reducing automobile emissions in our air and providing a relaxing and picturesque travel experience to link great locations along the northern New England coast.

"The inauguration of the 114-mile rail corridor will expand business and leisure activities between three states and benefit us all."

—Governor Angus King of Maine, quoted by Amtrak in its Dec 5 press release about the startup of *Downeaster* service between Portland ME and Boston MA.

"Traveling between Portland and Boston, *Downeaster* passengers will encounter settings graced by expansive beaches, majestic lighthouses, unlimited outdoor recreation, quaint villages, thriving arts, entertainment and world-renowned seafood cuisine."

—From the same press release quoted above.

RAIL FANTRIPS

Feb 23, 2002: Vermont Snow Express. Boston & MA points to snow-covered foothills of S. Vermont, chartered Atk train. 1st Cl "Caritas" car option. Option visit Flying Yankee in Claremont NH. $75 up. Mass Bay RRE, Box 4245 Andover MA 01810.

Send large SASE to addresses. One listing in RTN is free. It must give specific dates of operation. Write: Rail Travel News, Box 9007, Berkeley CA or E-mail to rtn@trainweb.com.

THE CANDY CANE EXPRESS (continued from page 15)

Train 2250 came in and departed on time at 1:29. He was barely off the platform when *Acela* train 2253 was announced for track 1. He was running about 15mins late and due out at 1:18. Just as I was in the elevator down to the pedestrian tunnel, the 1:59 Metro-North local was announced, for track 1. With many passengers on the platform waiting, an employee came along saying "You'll be boarding the second train. Don't get on the first one." In came the train from Grand Central, discharged and headed for the yards. Several who did not pay attention had to be chased off after boarding. Hopefully no one would up in the yards! Then the train to Grand Central came in from the east and boarded passengers. This was a last-minute operation, but we departed on time. The Candy Cane Express would be right behind us.

I detrained at Bridgeport and waited for the special train. As he neared, the train was announced as Amtrak train 145 to Washington, but as the train rumbled through, whoever had made the announcement for 145 ended with "Well, maybe not." People laughed.

Train 145 was next, running about 9mins late with one "meatball" (AEM7) and eight cars. Train 163 is scheduled not too far behind him, but about on 163's time in rolled train 161, running some 2.5 hours late. Passengers from Springfield off 461 were advised earlier to ride Metro-North to Bridgeport, Stamford, New Rochelle or Grand Central.

Train 161 also had a meatball, with eight cars, and hopefully he took anyone who was waiting for 163. About 10mins later the automated announcement advised that train 161 is running 2.5 hours late. Oops! You're a little late on that one!

Five minutes later, a new announcement was made that 163 was running two hours late. I was soon on the next Metro-North to New Haven, where the train board indicated that not only was 163 two hours late, but that *Acela* 2255 had been cancelled and those passengers were on train 163. I never did find out why all the delays. Just before I left the station, the special came back in—on time!

CARS & CONSISTS

***Pennsylvanian**, train 43, Sandusky OH Dec 9: engines 171 & 62 (P42s); cars 1553 & 1413 (MHCs), 25081, 54013 & 25095 coaches, 20021 café, express box cars 74099, 74076, 74006, 71160, 71079, 71011, 71092, 71105, 70015, 71136, 71018, 71158, 71205, Express Trak car 74111, Amtrak RoadRailers 460028, 462202, 462176, 462027 & 462114, Triple Crown 466769.

***Capitol Limited**, train 30, Toledo OH Dec 10: engines 182 & 98 (P42s); cars 1260 baggage, 39041 transition dorm-slpr, 32091 & 32026 slprs, 38046 diner, 33031 lounge, 31515 smoking coach, 34061 coach, 71032 express with mail, 1567 & 1459 MHCs, 1753 & 1721 mail/baggage, 1560 MHC, 71161 express-mail. Last three cars off in Toledo.—George Danchisen.

***Silver Star**, train 98, Miami Oct 28: engine 122; cars 1230, 2504 "Pacific Bend" 62025 "Northern View", 62026 "Ocean View", 8558 diner, 28024 "Philadelphia Club" lounge, 25063, 25069, 25048 & 25009 coaches. Added at Jacksonville: 1468 MHC & 70048 express.

***Sunset Limited**, train 1, Tallahassee FL Oct 28: engine 8; cars 1257, 39016, 32505 "Palm Springs", 32043, 32105 "Oregon", 38063, 33043, 34137, 34138, deadhead lounge 33002, express cars 71164, 70031, 71151, 71014, 71178 & 71115. Car 39016 was deadheading with plumbing problems, and deluxe slpr 32505 was substituting as crew sleeper. Above two trains ridden by Jack Turner in article this issue.

***Hiawatha** train 331, Chicago Nov 16: engine 165 (P42); cars 54524, 54514, 54554 Horizon coaches, 44552 Michigan ex-MU 889 coach, 90215 cab control car. Same, train 333: engine 39 (P42), same consist as above, with MHC 1444 behind the cab control car. Hiawathas now have cart service for hot & cold drinks and snacks, including wine in the afternoon. The attendant makes one pass through the train, then sets up a station for "seconds", with passengers walking to the cart.

***Illinois Zephyr**, train 348 Chicago Nov 16: engines 183 & 7 (P42s); cars 20253 business-dinette, 54518, 54557 & 54526 Horizon coaches.

***Wolverine**, train 351, Chicago Nov 16: engine 32 (P42); cars 1221 bag, 51003, 54543, 54510 & 54525 coaches, 53001 split business-dinette, engine 27 (P42) in push-pull. Same set on Nov 18 including engines, except 54575 & 53007 were in place of 54525 & 53001—all Horizon cars. Also saw here P42 engine 100 that was painted Manila for the 2-year Postal Service tour, now in "Shamu" colors at Chicago Union Station.—Jim Langan.

***Train 161**, New Haven CT Dec 8: engine 946 (AEM-7); cars coaches 21084, 44601, 82073, 82032, 82075 & 82022, dinette 20233, business class 81508. Train ar 4mins early, left on time.—Bob Underwood.

THE OPEN VESTIBULE

I have just had an unexpectedly inconvenient and annoying entry into the United States on Amtrak train 365 of Nov 28. As you doubtless know, normal procedure for years has been that the train stops for customs and immigration inspection at the Port Huron station. This time, however, all passengers were taken off at Sarnia and bused to the Blue Water Bridge entry point, where we went through a conventional bus-style inspection: everyone had to get off the bus and was driven to the Port Huron station to re-board the same trains, which apparently had been brought through the tunnel with only the crew aboard.

What worries me most is that on the one hand the Amtrak operating crew at Port Huron say this has been standard procedure since Sep 11, and that we were not warned that this would happen until about 10mins out of Sarnia. In particular, there was no warning on departure from Toronto, nor did the Amtrak sales agent at the 800 number say anything about it when I booked my travel in mid-Oct (though she did take note of my full name and citizenship, as has indeed been standard for border-crossing trips for about a year).

This strikes me as a disaster in progress. It is bad enough that passengers are being even further inconvenienced in a way that cannot possibly aid any sort of national security. (The inspection is exactly the same in either case; INS and Customs have their own building at Port Huron, and I have seen them take people off for more detailed examination and searching.) It is inexcusable that travelers aren't warned in advance that they will have to gather all their belongings and schlep off the train for an hour in mid-trip.

To be fair, things went pretty smoothly today: we stepped off the bus in Port Huron about an hour after we boarded it in Sarnia and the train was ready to re-board when we arrived (though food service took another 20mins or so to get going). But today there were only 20 passengers crossing the border, which in my experience is surprisingly few. I cannot help wondering how badly things went last week during the US thanksgiving rush, and although this is a slack travel time and travel demand is pretty abnormal anyway right now, I cannot help wondering whether ridership is plummeting because of the ill-considered change in border inspections...

The *International* has enough strikes against it as it is: abysmal station times in Toronto, almost no connections in Chicago, poor food service for an all-day trip, and none at all westbound during what most people consider lunchtime, and so on. It doesn't need any more problems!

Norman Wilson
Toronto, Canada.

(The above letter was directed to Canada's Transport 2000, who responded that they had presented the complaint to VIA and the Minister of Transport.)

Thanksgiving on the NE Corridor & Another Amtrak Opera Trip

By Jim Langan

On Nov 14 I was off again on another Opera trip to Chicago, for my son Kevin's opening at Chicago Lyric Opera in "Billy Budd" on Nov 17, originally [illegible] at Covent Garden in 1951, but later revised by [illegible] Britten, to its present form [illegible] years before Amtrak. And note that it also has a rail-oriented name—Budd. It has an all-male cast and is performed on board ship, and Billy is hanged from the yardarms in the finale. The story is a Herman Melville novel of the same name.

The trip also afforded an informal meeting of Amtrak Historical Society associates at the Quality Inn-Downtown at Halsted & Madison, close to Union Station and the Opera across the river. The hotel also hosts non-Chicago-based crews on overnight layovers, and it makes for interesting conversations in the sports bar-lounge. Rates are reasonable and I highly recommend it. You can leave your scanner on in the room to keep up with the action in the station and yards—beats TV!

While in Chicago I got the word in the lounge that effective Nov 14 the *City of New Orleans* (#58-59) began turning to the *Texas Eagle* (#28-29) instead of the *Empire Builder* (#7-8). The *City* was deadheading the Portland section (#27-28) most of the time southbound. I did note that the *Builder's* trainset was in on the north side of the station much earlier than in the past and had its express and RoadRailers on by about noon. This train and the *Three Rivers* have the best on-time performance of the long-distance trains.

I rode the *Three Rivers* outbound. It now has a Viewliner sleeper and Amfleet [illegible] ones, with a Horizon [illegible] layover from the [illegible] interesting express consist [illegible] arrives in Chicago an hour early. Home bound, I had to take the *Capitol Limited* on Nov 18. Even though reservations were made in early October, the *Three Rivers* was booked solid. So it was *Acela Regional* #178 home via Newark and NJ Transit at a reasonable hour. This route also gave me a pretty good overview of the NEC trains, yards, etc.

Then it was off to the in-laws for Thanksgiving in Darien CT, driving up with my younger son Thanksgiving morning and returning the next day on *Acela Express* #2159 from Stamford to Newark, and NJT home. When I made that reservation, I found that the *Acela Express* was about $10 cheaper than a Regional—a surprise—so naturally I took the *Acela Express*, the first since I made the inaugural round trip on Dec 11, 2000.

The only "beef" I had was that the rebuild of the Stamford station is far from completion, contrary to what I had heard or read when the *Acela Expresses* began

CARS & CONSISTS

***Pennsylvanian**, train 43, Sandusky OH Dec 9: engines 171 & 62 (P42s); cars 1553 & 1413 (MHCs), 25081, 54013 & 25095 coaches, 20021 café, express box cars 74099, 74076, 74006, 71160, 71079, 71011, 71092, 71105, 70015, 71136, 71018, 71158, 71205, Express Trak car 74111, Amtrak RoadRailers 460028, 462202, 462176, 462027 & 462114, Triple Crown 466769.

***Capitol Limited**, train 30, Toledo OH Dec 10: engines 182 & 98 (P42s); cars 1260 baggage, 39041 transition dorm-slpr, 32091 & 32026 slprs, 38046 diner, 33031 lounge, 31515 smoking coach, 34061 coach, 71032 express with mail, 1567 & 1459 MHCs, 1753 & 1721 mail/baggage, 1560 MHC, 71161 express-mail. Last three cars off in Toledo.—George Danchisen.

***Silver Star**, train 98, Miami Oct 28: engine 122; cars 1230, 2504 "Pacific Bend" 62025 "Northern View", 62026 "Ocean View", 8558 diner, 28024 "Philadelphia Club" lounge, 25063, 25069, 25048 & 25009 coaches. Added at Jacksonville: 1468 MHC & 70048 express.

***Sunset Limited**, train 1, Tallahassee FL Oct 28: engine 8; cars 1257, 39016, 32505 "Palm Springs", 32043, 32105 "Oregon", 38063, 33043, 34137, 34138, deadhead lounge 33002, express cars 71164, 70031, 71151, 71014, 71178 & 71115. Car 39016 was deadheading with plumbing problems, and deluxe slpr 32505 was substituting as crew sleeper. Above two trains ridden by Jack Turner in article this issue.

***Hiawatha** train 331, Chicago Nov 16: engine 165 (P42); cars 54524, 54514, 54554 Horizon coaches, 44552 Michigan ex-MU 889 coach, 90215 cab control car. Same, train 333: engine 39 (P42), same consist as above, with MHC 1444 behind the cab control car. Hiawathas now have cart service for hot & cold drinks and snacks, including wine in the afternoon. The attendant makes one pass through the train, then sets up a station for "seconds", with passengers walking to the cart.

***Illinois Zephyr**, train 348 Chicago Nov 16: engines 183 & 7 (P42s); cars 20253 business-dinette, 54518, 54557 & 54526 Horizon coaches.

***Wolverine**, train 351, Chicago Nov 16: engine 32 (P42); cars 1221 bag, 51003, 54543, 54510 & 54525 coaches, 53001 split business-dinette, engine 27 (P42) in push-pull. Same set on Nov 18 including engines, except 54575 & 53007 were in place of 54525 & 53001—all Horizon cars. Also saw here P42 engine 100 that was painted Manila for the 2-year Postal Service tour, now in "Shamu" colors at Chicago Union Station.—Jim Langan.

***Train 161**, New Haven CT Dec 8: engine 946 (AEM-7); cars coaches 21084, 44601, 82073, 82032, 82075 & 82022, dinette 20233, business class 81508. Train ar 4mins early, left on time.—Bob Underwood.

THE OPEN VESTIBULE

I have just had an unexpectedly inconvenient and annoying entry into the United States on Amtrak train 365 of Nov 28. As you doubtless know, normal procedure for years has been that the train stops for customs and immigration inspection at the Port Huron station. This time, however, all passengers were taken off at Sarnia and bused to the Blue Water Bridge entry point, where we went through a conventional bus-style inspection: everyone had to get off the bus and was driven to the Port Huron station to re-board the same trains, which apparently had been brought through the tunnel with only the crew aboard.

What worries me most is that on the one hand the Amtrak operating crew at Port Huron say this has been standard procedure since Sep 11, and that we were not warned that this would happen until about 10mins out of Sarnia. In particular, there was no warning on departure from Toronto, nor did the Amtrak sales agent at the 800 number say anything about it when I booked my travel in mid-Oct (though she did take note of my full name and citizenship, as has indeed been standard for border-crossing trips for about a year).

This strikes me as a disaster in progress. It is bad enough that passengers are being even further inconvenienced in a way that cannot possibly aid any sort of national security. (The inspection is exactly the same in either case; INS and Customs have their own building at Port Huron, and I have seen them take people off for more detailed examination and searching.) It is inexcusable that travelers aren't warned in advance that they will have to gather all their belongings and schlep off the train for an hour in mid-trip.

To be fair, things went pretty smoothly today: we stepped off the bus in Port Huron about an hour after we boarded it in Sarnia and the train was ready to re-board when we arrived (though food service took another 20mins or so to get going). But today there were only 20 passengers crossing the border, which in my experience is surprisingly few. I cannot help wondering how badly things went last week during the US thanksgiving rush, and although this is a slack travel time and travel demand is pretty abnormal anyway right now, I cannot help wondering whether ridership is plummeting because of the ill-considered change in border inspections...

The *International* has enough strikes against it as it is: abysmal station times in Toronto, almost no connections in Chicago, poor food service for an all-day trip, and none at all westbound during what most people consider lunchtime, and so on. It doesn't need any more problems!

Norman Wilson
Toronto, Canada.

(The above letter was directed to Canada's Transport 2000, who responded that they had presented the complaint to VIA and the Minister of Transport.)

Thanksgiving on the NE Corridor & Another Amtrak Opera Trip

By Jim Langan

On Nov 14 I was off again on another Opera trip to Chicago, for my son Kevin's opening at Chicago Lyric Opera in "Billy Budd" on Nov 17, originally [illegible] at Covent Garden in 1951, but later revised by [illegible] Britten, to its present form [illegible] years before Amtrak. And note that it also has a rail-oriented name—Budd. It has an all-male cast and is performed on board ship, and Billy is hanged from the yardarms in the finale. The story is a Herman Melville novel of the same name.

The trip also afforded an informal meeting of Amtrak Historical Society associates at the Quality Inn-Downtown at Halsted & Madison, close to Union Station and the Opera across the river. The hotel also hosts non-Chicago-based crews on overnight layovers, and it makes for interesting conversations in the sports bar-lounge. Rates are reasonable and I highly recommend it. You can leave your scanner on in the room to keep up with the action in the station and yards—beats TV!

While in Chicago I got the word in the lounge that effective Nov 14 the *City of New Orleans* (#58-59) began turning to the *Texas Eagle* (#28-29) instead of the *Empire Builder* (#7-8). The *City* was deadheading the Portland section (#27-28) most of the time southbound. I did note that the *Builder's* trainset was in on the north side of the station much earlier than in the past and had its express and RoadRailers on by about noon. This train and the *Three Rivers* have the best on-time performance of the long-distance trains.

I rode the *Three Rivers* outbound. It now has a Viewliner sleeper and Amfleet [illegible] with a Horizon [illegible] layover from the Pas[illegible] interesting express consist [illegible] arrives in Chicago an hour early. Home[illegible] bound, I had to take the *Capitol Limited* on Nov 18. Even though reservations were made in early October, the *Three Rivers* was booked solid. So it was *Acela Regional* #178 home via Newark and NJ Transit at a reasonable hour. This route also gave me a pretty good overview of the NEC trains, yards, etc.

Then it was off to the in-laws for Thanksgiving in Darien CT, driving up with my younger son Thanksgiving morning and returning the next day on *Acela Express* #2159 from Stamford to Newark, and NJT home. When I made that reservation, I found that the *Acela Express* was about $10 cheaper than a Regional—a surprise—so naturally I took the *Acela Express*, the first since I made the inaugural round trip on Dec 11, 2000.

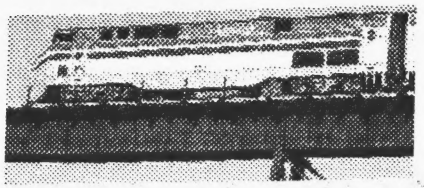
The only "beef" I had was that the rebuild of the Stamford station is far from completion, contrary to what I had heard or read when the *Acela Expresses* began

stopping there this past spring. There are only three tracks operating through, out of the five. One track is being rewired and the other didn't have any rails, but still the old wire.

Something was awry at Newark. Police from Amtrak, the state and the city swarmed the platform levels.

The dispatching by Metro-North was great. In the 20mins that I was there, three eastbounds, one Amtrak and two Metro-North arrived and left on track 4; and three westbounds, all Metro-North, arrived on the other two tracks: one diesel-hauled Danbury local terminated and reversed into the yards, while the other two were Grand Central-bound, a local all-stop originating at Stamford and an express from New Haven. The "beef" was when my *Acela Express* arrived on time on track 3, which has location numbers along the platform, and the Metro-North station announcer just said "arriving". The platform was quite packed, and the train only platformed the end first-class and the last coach with the power car. The caused a mad dash from where everyone was standing to the extreme westbound end, lining up at the first vestibule. Only my "railroad knowhow" let me get by to the front door of the coach and a good window seat before the crowd came streaming through the aisle from the rear first-class car. A little training of the Metro-North announcer surely would help.

We were on time at both New York and Newark. There is a report out that Connecticutt DOT's *Shore Line East* commuter trains are to be extended west to Bridgeport and Stamford effective Dec 17, which will only make the station worse!



Thanksgiving on the NEC: I had decided not to be at Newark this year on the Sunday after the holiday because of security reasons. On the trip to Chicago Nov 14, something was awry at Newark; it may have happened on the bus level of the station, as police from Amtrak, the state and city swarmed the platform levels, rushing to the east (northbound) end of the station, then probably downstairs, since they did not run out on the bridge to Dock tower. PATH trains were held at their platforms and Amtrak/NJT arrivals and departures were held out. The situation lasted only 15-20mins before returning to normal, and waiting passengers on the platforms were not asked to leave. I didn't need the hassle of being asked to leave on the next NJT train home, as only ticketed passengers supposedly were to be allowed on the platforms.

Even though it was a warm day starting out, it became quite windy from noon on, with temperatures dropping. Seconding my decision was the report of a CSX derailment in Hunt's Point yard about 1:45pm next to Amtrak's Hell Gate Bridge route to and from New England, bringing down the poles and the catenary, with all electric trains from New Rochelle to Harold Tower in Sunnyside brought to a halt. Diesel engines had to rescue the trains on Amtrak's busiest day of the year! So in general I can say from the special Thanksgiving timetables issued that the normal Mon-Fri *Acela Expresses* did not run on Thanksgiving, and normal Sat & Sun trains 2201, 2251, 2253 southbd and 2250 2290 northbd did, although it was all business class service, no first class. A special train, #2200, ran Washington-New York only, in normal M-F Wash-Boston train #2166's slot, leaving Wash at 1pm and ar NY at 3:48pm. This train number is supposedly scheduled to start effective Dec 9, at 8am Wash-Boston.

In general, there were two types of trains scheduled over the Thanksgiving weekend, mainly Wed before and Sun after: (1) "Holiday Expresses" numbered in the 30XX series ran both way between NY and Wash on a reserved-seat-only basis with no food service or business class, and in some cases (NJT MUs) no rest rooms. If it had MARC equipment, it had rest rooms.

(2) "Holiday Specials" numbered in the 10XX series were Amfleet between NY and Wash—the 11XX series Wash-Boston and the 128X series NY-Albany, again both ways, including food service and business class, all reserved except the Empire Service. The other unreserved trains were Keystone Service to and from Harrisburg to either Philadelphia or NY and the Springfield-New Haven shuttles with C-DOT's *Shore Line East* "Constitutionliners" (ex-SPVs).

Amtrak Returns to Louisville

By Robert J. Stewart

On Dec 4 Amtrak returned to Louisville KY when the *Kentucky Cardinal* began serving a new stop at Louisville Union Station, extending the train from Jeffersonville IN (which remains as an Amtrak stop). Robert J. Stewart, as President of the Tennessee Association of Railroad Passengers, was on hand for the festivities.

After 25 years, a passenger train has returned to Louisville station. I arrived in Louisville the evening of Monday, Dec 3 and I proceeded immediately to check out the station.

The track (ties and ballast covered with asphalt) was in place, with a bumper post and a nice platform with ribbed metal flooring for good traction. The lights had not been installed, but the TARC lights in the parking lot do a good job. There was a sign at the end of the track facing Broadway announcing the new service. On the platform were signs reading "Amtrak-Louisville". A pathway was marked from the platform to the station. At 5:45 that night they were putting down mulch around newly-planted trees—everything looked good for tomorrow's celebration.

The next morning I proceeded over to the station and boarded the buses that would take us to Jeffersonville to board the train.

The train at Jeffersonville consisted of two Genesis engines, Superliner coach, ex-Santa Fe Hi-level coach, Superliner sleeper, ex-L&N "Royal Street" (5 double bdrm-obs lounge) and ex-L&N business car.

I escorted Mayor Wright of Gallatin to the business car and introduced him to leaders whom Louisville Mayor Dave Armstrong had assembled: Acting Amtrak Intercity President Don Saunders; Kentucky Lt. Governor Steve Henry and other CSX and Amtrak officials. I was asked to stay on the business car with the other officials and did not refuse their request!

We left Jeffersonville around 9:30am and headed across the river. We actually stopped on the middle of the river bridge due to a barge coming north on the canal that parallels the river (they have priority).

We proceeded along the elevated right of way (still using Pennsy position signals), and passed over the CSX switch (hand-thrown), and waited for alignment to back into the station.

A large crowd had gathered on the platform, including many news media reps.

ON TO NASHVILLE: Amtrak planned a test train run on Dec 20 from Louisville to Nashville, using the equipment of the *Kentucky Cardinal*. CSX said the trip would take about four hours each way, easily within the 13-hour layover time of the *Kentucky Cardinal* in Louisville.

In the photo above we see the cover of RTN 106 from April 1975, picturing the Amtrak *Floridian* against a backdrop of the impressive Nashville station.

●●●

There had been light rain earlier, but it had stopped and the sun was trying to break through the clouds.

We backed into the station. I was able to open the top half of the small delivery door on the business car and watch the arrival into the station. It was a splendid sight. Mayor Armstrong was on the rear platform along with Jeffersonville Mayor, Lt. Governor, Amtrak Intercity Acting President and others.

Brief remarks were made by the mayors of Louisville and Jeffersonville, Lt. Governor Henry and Amtrak's Don Saunders. All stated the desire to continue the train to Nashville.

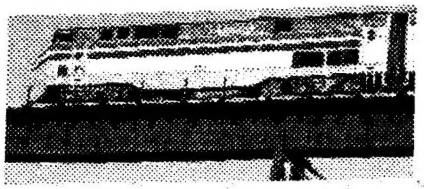
After the brief speeches, we all moved to

stopping there this past spring. There are only three tracks operating through, out of the five. One track is being rewired and the other didn't have any rails, but still the old wire.

Something was awry at Newark. Police from Amtrak, the state and the city swarmed the platform levels.

The dispatching by Metro-North was great. In the 20mins that I was there, three eastbounds, one Amtrak and two Metro-North arrived and left on track 4; and three westbounds, all Metro-North, arrived on the other two tracks: one diesel-hauled Danbury local terminated and reversed into the yards, while the other two were Grand Central-bound, a local all-stop originating at Stamford and an express from New Haven. The "beef" was when my *Acela Express* arrived on time on track 3, which has location numbers along the platform, and the Metro-North station announcer just said "arriving". The platform was quite packed, and the train only platformed the end first-class and the last coach with the power car. The caused a mad dash from where everyone was standing to the extreme westbound end, lining up at the first vestibule. Only my "railroad knowhow" let me get by to the front door of the coach and a good window seat before the crowd came streaming through the aisle from the rear first-class car. A little training of the Metro-North announcer surely would help.

We were on time at both New York and Newark. There is a report out that Connecticutt DOT's *Shore Line East* commuter trains are to be extended west to Bridgeport and Stamford effective Dec 17, which will only make the station worse!



Thanksgiving on the NEC: I had decided not to be at Newark this year on the Sunday after the holiday because of security reasons. On the trip to Chicago Nov 14, something was awry at Newark; it may have happened on the bus level of the station, as police from Amtrak, the state and city swarmed the platform levels, rushing to the east (northbound) end of the station, then probably downstairs, since they did not run out on the bridge to Dock tower. PATH trains were held at their platforms and Amtrak/NJT arrivals and departures were held out. The situation lasted only 15-20mins before returning to normal, and waiting passengers on the platforms were not asked to leave. I didn't need the hassle of being asked to leave on the next NJT train home, as only ticketed passengers supposedly were to be allowed on the platforms.

Even though it was a warm day starting out, it became quite windy from noon on, with temperatures dropping. Seconding my decision was the report of a CSX derailment in Hunt's Point yard about 1:45pm next to Amtrak's Hell Gate Bridge route to and from New England, bringing down the poles and the catenary, with all electric trains from New Rochelle to Harold Tower in Sunnyside brought to a halt. Diesel engines had to rescue the trains on Amtrak's busiest day of the year! So in general I can say from the special Thanksgiving timetables issued that the normal Mon-Fri *Acela Expresses* did not run on Thanksgiving, and normal Sat & Sun trains 2201, 2251, 2253 southbd and 2250 2290 northbd did, although it was all business class service, no first class. A special train, #2200, ran Washington-New York only, in normal M-F Wash-Boston train #2166's slot, leaving Wash at 1pm and ar NY at 3:48pm. This train number is supposedly scheduled to start effective Dec 9, at 8am Wash-Boston.

In general, there were two types of trains scheduled over the Thanksgiving weekend, mainly Wed before and Sun after: (1) "Holiday Expresses" numbered in the 30XX series ran both way between NY and Wash on a reserved-seat-only basis with no food service or business class, and in some cases (NJT MUs) no rest rooms. If it had MARC equipment, it had rest rooms.

(2) "Holiday Specials" numbered in the 10XX series were Amfleet between NY and Wash—the 11XX series Wash-Boston and the 128X series NY-Albany, again both ways, including food service and business class, all reserved except the Empire Service. The other unreserved trains were Keystone Service to and from Harrisburg to either Philadelphia or NY and the Springfield-New Haven shuttles with C-DOT's *Shore Line East* "Constitutionliners" (ex-SPVs).

Amtrak Returns to Louisville

By Robert J. Stewart

On Dec 4 Amtrak returned to Louisville KY when the *Kentucky Cardinal* began serving a new stop at Louisville Union Station, extending the train from Jeffersonville IN (which remains as an Amtrak stop). Robert J. Stewart, as President of the Tennessee Association of Railroad Passengers, was on hand for the festivities.

After 25 years, a passenger train has returned to Louisville station. I arrived in Louisville the evening of Monday, Dec 3 and I proceeded immediately to check out the station.

The track (ties and ballast covered with asphalt) was in place, with a bumper post and a nice platform with ribbed metal flooring for good traction. The lights had not been installed, but the TARC lights in the parking lot do a good job. There was a sign at the end of the track facing Broadway announcing the new service. On the platform were signs reading "Amtrak-Louisville". A pathway was marked from the platform to the station. At 5:45 that night they were putting down mulch around newly-planted trees—everything looked good for tomorrow's celebration.

The next morning I proceeded over to the station and boarded the buses that would take us to Jeffersonville to board the train.

The train at Jeffersonville consisted of two Genesis engines, Superliner coach, ex-Santa Fe Hi-level coach, Superliner sleeper, ex-L&N "Royal Street" (5 double bdrm-obs lounge) and ex-L&N business car.

I escorted Mayor Wright of Gallatin to the business car and introduced him to leaders whom Louisville Mayor Dave Armstrong had assembled: Acting Amtrak Intercity President Don Saunders; Kentucky Lt. Governor Steve Henry and other CSX and Amtrak officials. I was asked to stay on the business car with the other officials and did not refuse their request!

We left Jeffersonville around 9:30am and headed across the river. We actually stopped on the middle of the river bridge due to a barge coming north on the canal that parallels the river (they have priority).

We proceeded along the elevated right of way (still using Pennsy position signals), and passed over the CSX switch (hand-thrown), and waited for alignment to back into the station.

A large crowd had gathered on the platform, including many news media reps.

ON TO NASHVILLE: Amtrak planned a test train run on Dec 20 from Louisville to Nashville, using the equipment of the *Kentucky Cardinal*. CSX said the trip would take about four hours each way, easily within the 13-hour layover time of the *Kentucky Cardinal* in Louisville.

In the photo above we see the cover of RTN 106 from April 1975, picturing the Amtrak *Floridian* against a backdrop of the impressive Nashville station.

●●●

There had been light rain earlier, but it had stopped and the sun was trying to break through the clouds.

We backed into the station. I was able to open the top half of the small delivery door on the business car and watch the arrival into the station. It was a splendid sight. Mayor Armstrong was on the rear platform along with Jeffersonville Mayor, Lt. Governor, Amtrak Intercity Acting President and others.

Brief remarks were made by the mayors of Louisville and Jeffersonville, Lt. Governor Henry and Amtrak's Don Saunders. All stated the desire to continue the train to Nashville.

After the brief speeches, we all moved to

the back of the train. A fresh tie had been placed on top of the rails and two golden spikes were driven into the tie.

That evening a group of us diehards returned to the station to ride the first northbound trip out of the station. About 70 of us rode to Scottsburg (Amtrak made a special stop just for this special train) and then boarded a charter bus back to Louisville station.

It was a wonderful day and a positive stop in the midst of all the negative items on Amtrak. Now we need to spread the word so that many will ride the train—and the connection bus from Nashville.

Now our rallying cry is: "On to Nashville!"

Aboard the Amtrak Test Train to Nashville

By Dan Kuhl

Aboard the Dec 20 Amtrak test train from Louisville to Nashville: The train left Louisville at 10:17am, Elizabethtown at 11:30am, Bowling Green at 1:01pm, and reached Nashville at 3pm EST. There were several speed restrictions encountered, mostly for track work. The train was also delayed about 30mins by three northbound CSX freights at three different locations.

The actual running time at the 60mph track speed would have been about four hours flat if it had not been for the speed restrictions for track work, meeting freight trains and following a freight south of Amqui for a few miles on an approach signal. Those who compared the present track with its earlier condition said that the track rode better than it ever did in L&N days. It's all welded rail, and signaled.

Aboard the train was former Amtrak President Paul Reistrup. He seems to enjoy passenger trains; or perhaps he still just remembers his days at the helm of Amtrak.

I was surprised that CSX does so poorly with Amtrak. With all the VIPs on board, my father (who is an official with the Transit Authority of the River Cities—Louisville) and I were stunned that CSX would nail the train so much for freight traffic. I can hear it now: "Sorry, we have too much traffic for your passenger train." In all the three meets that we had, Amtrak was the one in the hole.

The consist of the train was the *Kentucky Cardinal*'s normal consist, plus a Superliner I lounge, a transition sleeper and a CSX track car.

NARP Presses for High-Speed Trains

The terrorist attacks of Sep 11 made clear to citizens and policy makers the wisdom of a transportation system that provides travelers with choices, including the choice of intercity passenger trains. The attacks underscored the vulnerability of an American economy so dependent on a single mode of transportation. Three months after Sep 11, ridership on our nation's intercity passenger rail system remains strong. In the Northeast, where the new *Acela Express* high-speed trains and Metroliner services operate between Washington DC, New York and Boston, ridership is up 40% over the same time last year. Citizens in other regions of the country want, deserve and would benefit from development of high-speed rail.

Now, more than ever, it makes sense to invest in high-speed rail service in corridors around the country as an efficient, relaxing and safe complement to highway and airline travel.—From NARP Dec 21 statement on the High Speed Rail Bill and Amtrak market share growth.

The folks at Rail Travel News
wish you all the joys of the
holiday season
and fine train riding in the new year!

Click
(ety-clack)
onto
RailTravelNews.com

RTN's new Web site
Hosted by Trainweb

RTN is printed using non-petroleum soy ink and recycled paper.

Before you move, be sure to send RTN your *old* and *new* addresses.

FOR NEW SUBSCRIBERS

Write: Message Media
Box 9007
Berkeley CA 94709

Send me _____ year(s) of Rail Travel News (24 issues per year). My remittance is enclosed.
Rates: $29 one year ($26 seniors), $56 2 years ($51 seniors), $79 3 years.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

EXPRESS ADS

http://trainweb.com—A web site devoted to Amtrak travel: Dozens of travelogues and hundreds of color photos are featured along with information on routes, schedules, prices and accommodations.

Train Rider Magazine is your armchair route to rail adventure! Don't miss an issue! Only $14 for 12 issues from Message Media, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709. Ask for free railfan/rail advocate labels.

RTN ad rates: Express ads $1.50 per line of 80 spaces. Display ads $1.50 per square inch. Message Media, Box 9007, Berkeley CA 94709.

Your Domestic and International Rail Travel Experts Since 1975

Ted Blishak

Call 1-800-347-0645
E-mail: aot@trainweb.com

ACCENT ON TRAVEL
RESERVATIONS

3939 South 6th St. • Suite 331 • Klamath Falls, OR 97603
Web Address: www.trainweb.com/aot

SILVER & BLUE

mailing/handling fee for brochures credit cards ok!

At last! Travel agents who can put your whole trip together.

VIA®

®Registered trademark of VIA Rail Canada Inc ™Trademark of VIA Rail Canada Inc

CANADA'S PASSENGER TRAIN NETWORK.™